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BUFFALO BILL— AS I KNEW HIM

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GROUNDHOG'S GOLD

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RUN OR BE SCALPED!

FIRST EDITION!

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THE BEST OF TRUE WEST

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ANNUAL, 1977

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Cover: "The Wayfinder" by Joe Grandee

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READ THIS FIRST!

TRUE WEST came out as a wobbly-legged dogie in 1953 with only 50,000 copies on the newsstands. There were those of us who thought we would make a 90 to 100% sale. We bet coffee, cokes, etc. on the percentage of sale and posted our bets on the wall. When the sale finally leveled out at 49%—nobody could believe it! We had a lot to learn about launching a new magazine, and especially merchandising one. Those early-day experiences would make a book!

For years now I have been receiving letters from a wide variety of readers—from those who read Vol. 1, No. 1 right on down to folks who have just discovered us and want to buy as many back issues as are available. One thing about readers who didn't keep those first issues "Because I didn't think they would become so valuable!" is that nearly all of them say they wish they had kept a complete collection for their children and grandchildren. Most letters end up with something to the effect that if we ever republish those old issues, or even stories from them, to be double-sure to let them know—they want to start a collection. Since this is a Special it isn't being offered as a subscription item. Therefore, we are depending on newsstand sales entirely. So, to those of you who write nice letters asking what you can do to help the cause, tell people about this Special—*let them know!*

There is nothing so dismal looking on a newsstand as a stack of magazines that doesn't sell. It gives me an empty feeling in the stomach when I think of the sweat, tears, work, money and heart that goes into putting out a magazine, copies of which are destroyed if they do not sell over a period of from three to six weeks. In the early days I kept a notebook and made every newsstand in town. Wish I had a picture of me going in those newsstands, half afraid to take a look, then counting every copy carefully. If not a single copy had sold, I would count them over again and I suppose the disappointed look on my face was so apparent that the newsstand owner would comment that business had been a little slow lately and he'd probably sell several by tomorrow.

I'd make the rounds *every day*, because it was absolutely impossible for me to understand why there wasn't a mad rush for those precious copies of a magazine that had been given credit by some of the biggest newspapers and magazines in the country as "creating a new type of Western journalism." It took me a long time to realize just how hard a task it is to merchandise a new item. Thank heavens, only "The Best of" is new in this title so that 99% of the people who buy this particular Special should know exactly what they are going to find in it.

It might be easy for a first reader to get a little confused about the time element after reading an article written by someone who actually knew and wrote about his experience with some famous Western characters. But when you realize most of these stories were written over twenty years ago it should put everything in focus and I hope you will enjoy them as much as I did.

It was a real challenge to get this one together. Many of the writers were old when they wrote these stories and have passed on. We haven't been able to get in touch with others. In case we haven't reached you, and your article is in this issue, drop us a line. We need your current address. You might even be a subscriber and we wouldn't know it since, thanks to "progress," everything is filed by zip code rather than name.

If any of you readers wish to comment about this Special or any of the articles in it, drop us a line. We'd appreciate it. We'll get as many of your letters in the next issue as possible—that is (depending on newsstand sales), if there is a next issue!—Joe "Hosstail" Small

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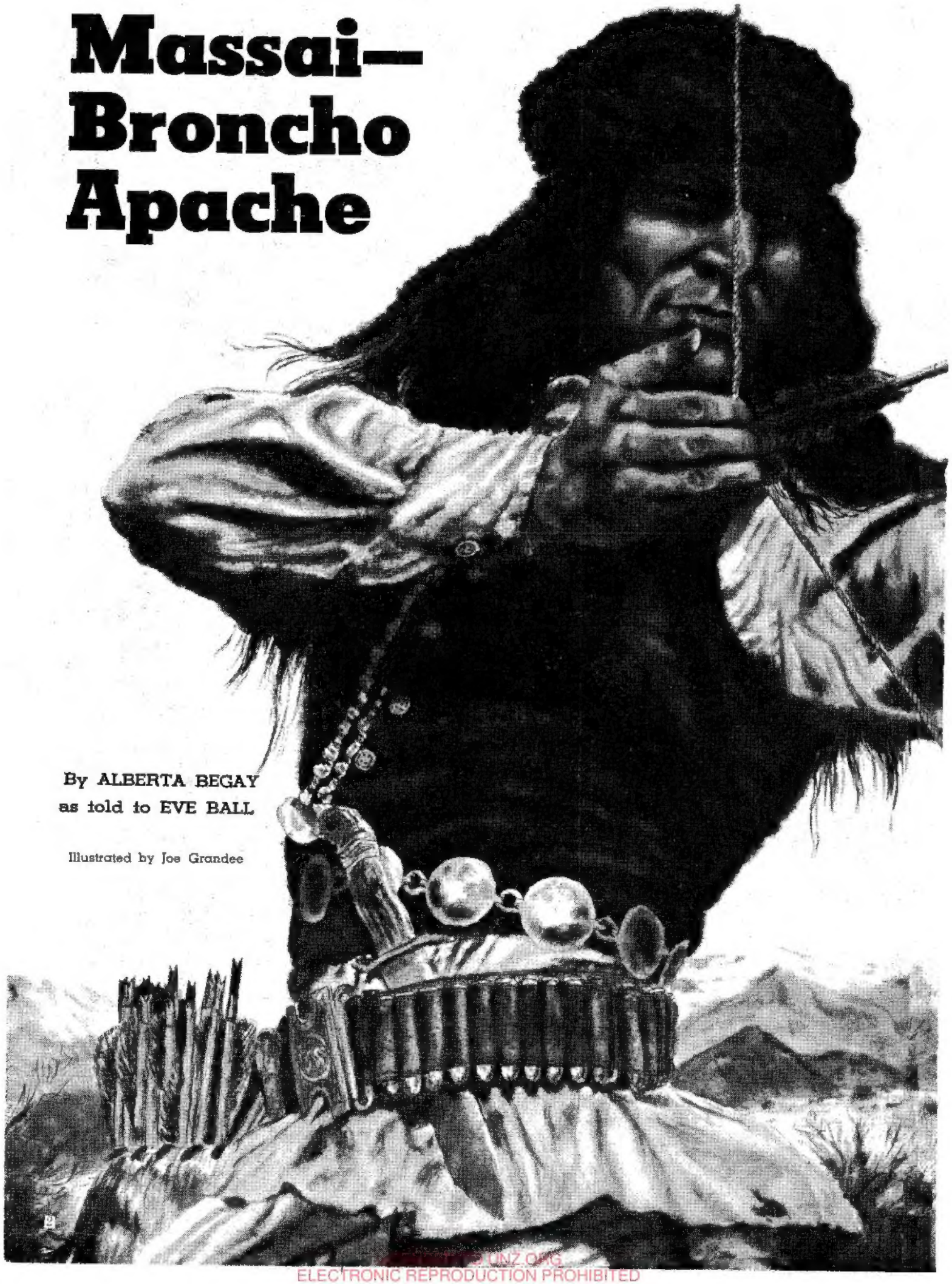
Massai—Broncho Apache



By ALBERTA BEGAY
as told to EVE BALL

Illustrated by Joe Grandee

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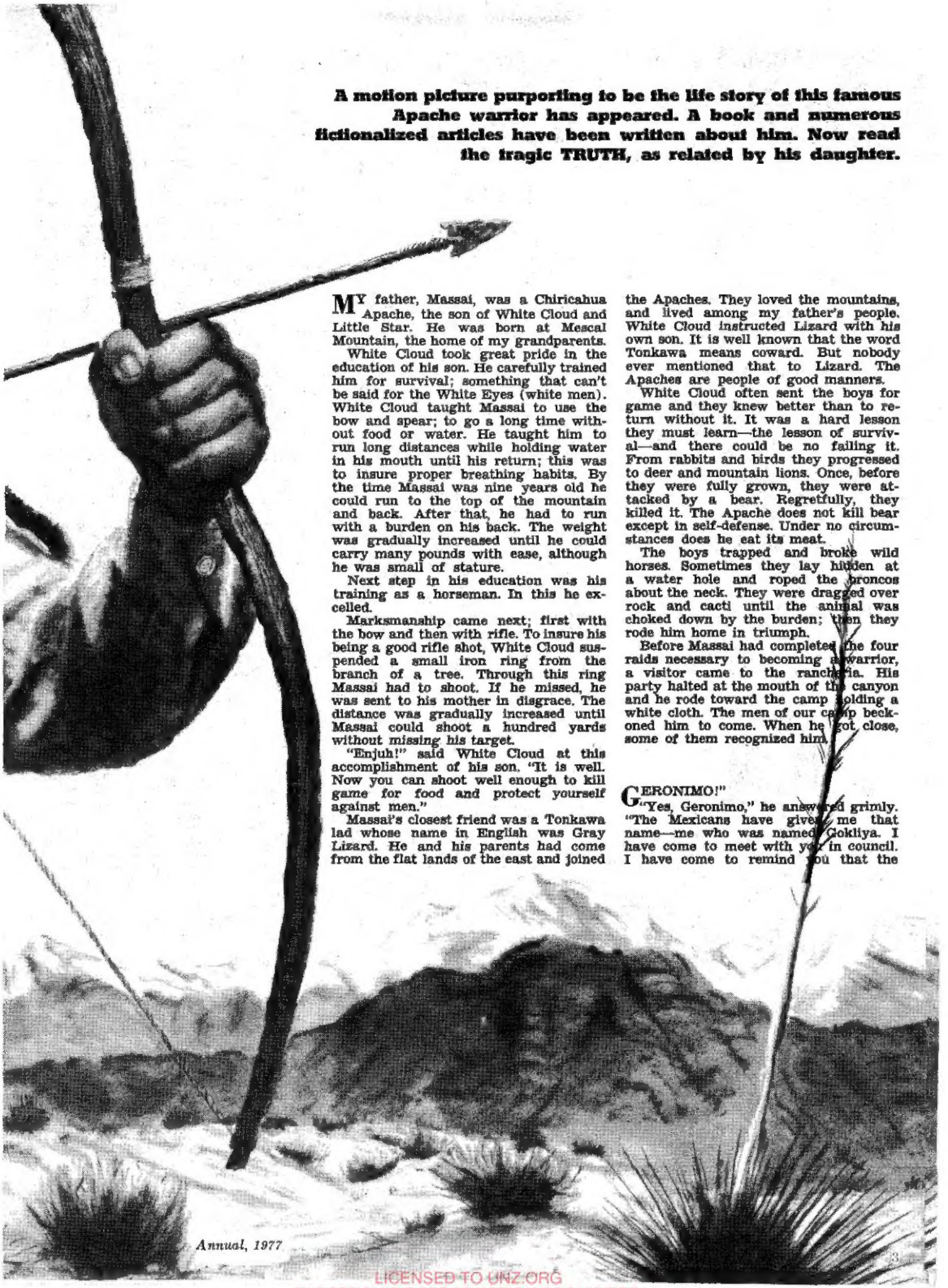
A motion picture purporting to be the life story of this famous Apache warrior has appeared. A book and numerous fictionalized articles have been written about him. Now read the tragic TRUTH, as related by his daughter.



MY father, Massai, was a Chiricahua Apache, the son of White Cloud and Little Star. He was born at Mescal Mountain, the home of my grandparents.

White Cloud took great pride in the education of his son. He carefully trained him for survival; something that can't be said for the White Eyes (white men). White Cloud taught Massai to use the bow and spear; to go a long time without food or water. He taught him to run long distances while holding water in his mouth until his return; this was to insure proper breathing habits. By the time Massai was nine years old he could run to the top of the mountain and back. After that, he had to run with a burden on his back. The weight was gradually increased until he could carry many pounds with ease, although he was small of stature.

Next step in his education was his training as a horseman. In this he excelled.

Marksmanship came next; first with the bow and then with rifle. To insure his being a good rifle shot, White Cloud suspended a small iron ring from the branch of a tree. Through this ring Massai had to shoot. If he missed, he was sent to his mother in disgrace. The distance was gradually increased until Massai could shoot a hundred yards without missing his target.

"Enjuh!" said White Cloud at this accomplishment of his son. "It is well. Now you can shoot well enough to kill game for food and protect yourself against men."

Massai's closest friend was a Tonkawa lad whose name in English was Gray Lizard. He and his parents had come from the flat lands of the east and joined the Apaches. They loved the mountains, and lived among my father's people. White Cloud instructed Lizard with his own son. It is well known that the word Tonkawa means coward. But nobody ever mentioned that to Lizard. The Apaches are people of good manners.

White Cloud often sent the boys for game and they knew better than to return without it. It was a hard lesson they must learn—the lesson of survival—and there could be no failing it. From rabbits and birds they progressed to deer and mountain lions. Once, before they were fully grown, they were attacked by a bear. Regretfully, they killed it. The Apache does not kill bear except in self-defense. Under no circumstances does he eat its meat.

The boys trapped and broke wild horses. Sometimes they lay hidden at a water hole and roped the broncos about the neck. They were dragged over rock and cacti until the animal was choked down by the burden; then they rode him home in triumph.

Before Massai had completed the four raids necessary to becoming a warrior, a visitor came to the rancheria. His party halted at the mouth of the canyon and he rode toward the camp holding a white cloth. The men of our camp beckoned him to come. When he got close, some of them recognized him.

GERONIMO!"

"Yes, Geronimo," he answered grimly. "The Mexicans have given me that name—me who was named Goklíya. I have come to meet with you in council. I have come to remind you that the

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Above: Alberta Begay, daughter of Massai and author of this story, in her ceremonial robe. Below: This very old photograph shows an Apache with children. Little girls were always fully clothed.

White Eyes have invaded our land. They have murdered our Chief. They killed Mangas Colorados after promising him their protection when he went to their camp to treat for peace.

"They have murdered my wife, mother, and three children. They have killed your people. They have killed our game, taken our land and all that is ours. I came to ask that you join me in fighting them—that all Apaches join me. We must drive them out before it is too late."

"There are too many," objected one man.

"They must have litters like dogs," said another. "Or how could they multiply so rapidly?"

Geronimo went on, unheeding. "Cochise died of a broken heart because he foresaw the extermination of his people. Tah-zay, the son who succeeded him, trusted the White Eyes. He went to Washington and they poisoned him. Juh, the Nedni chief, is dead. Nachai and Mangus have seen what happened to their fathers and they do nothing!"

Geronimo paused and fixed us all with his fierce eyes.

"Who will join me in driving out the White Eyes?"

"You are not a chief," said one man.

Geronimo whirled on him. "I have been the war leader for Cochise. I have led a band for Mangas Colorados. I will lead you!"

"We are a free people," said White Cloud calmly. "Among the Apaches there is no compulsory military service."

"So be it," replied Geronimo. "Let each man decide for himself."

White Cloud agreed. "We will hold a council and let you know our decision."

Massai and Gray Lizard wanted to go with Geronimo. They asked permission of their fathers and were told: "You are almost men, you must decide for yourselves."

They and others told Geronimo they would join him.

"The time is not yet ripe," he answered. "It will take two summers, perhaps more, to prepare and store food."

"For what?"

"For emergencies, you impatient ones! To fight the White Eyes we must travel fast and ride light. When we reach a hiding place we must have food, clothing, and—especially—moccasins, there. We must have cooking pots. We must have ammunition. It is for you to secure and place these things where I shall direct. I know every water hole between Fort Wingate and Casas Grandes; between Silver City and Chihuahua. I know hidden caves where supplies can be cached. Then, when we have supplies to last for many months, we will strike!"

Our people were not all in favor of joining forces with Geronimo, but all thought his idea of preparing for war to be good. They began killing deer, drying meat, tanning hides and storing them in safe places. As the cactus fruit ripened they gathered and dried it. They baked great quantities of mescal, stored large supplies of mesquite beans and acorns, gathered pifiónes when the trees bore. They worked so hard at storing food for the future that the supply close to them was made scarce.

Massai and Gray Lizard got their fathers' permission to make a journey to the west in search of food. Each led a packhorse behind his mount. They rode far toward the west, crossing a high range of mountains and a wide valley, then another range from the top of which they could see the Big Water. Between them and the ocean were some low hills, which concealed a Mexican rancheria. But they did not know of this, and so set to hunting without fear of being discovered.

There were many deer on the ridge, and there was a cave on the west slope with a bench of grass land, and a spring. They settled in that place and began preparing meat and hides. They saw no one, but their training required that one keep watch while the other worked. Soon their supplies exceeded their means of carrying them. They wrapped jerky in a buffalo hide they had brought with them and hid it in the cave. Loading all four horses with food and buckskin, they left for home. Massai spoke to his friend as they rode away:

"Now, we must remember this place and how to return. If you should come alone the supplies are yours, and the same for me, but I hope we are always together."

"It shall be as you say," replied Gray Lizard.

WHEN the boys reached Mescal Mountain they found that those who had wished to join Geronimo had gone to the Warm Springs Reservation, so they followed to Ojo Caliente. There they found that the troops had arrested Geronimo and taken him to San Carlos. He and his people, along with Victorio and Loco, the Warm Springs leader and his assistant chief, had all been driven like cattle to San Carlos. And, as every Apache knows, that is the worst place in the world.

No White Eye could have captured them, but Chiricahua scouts, some of their own people, had joined the White Eyes. Had the boys known of their treachery, they could have escaped. But they thought them men and brothers, and permitted them to walk into their camp. The scouts took them, too, to San Carlos.

"Well, it is one way to see Geronimo and learn his plans," said Massai. "When he is ready, he will leave. The troops cannot stop him. Meanwhile, the stupid White Eyes will give him and his people food and clothing."

"If they are alive to use it," said Lizard. "Don't you know of the terrible heat, insects, and sickness at San Carlos? The soldiers could not live there. They are putting the Apaches there to die!"

"We can leave when we like," replied Massai. "Neither the soldiers nor Geronimo can hold us. We will talk to him."

Geronimo bade them to be patient and await his word.

I do not know how long they were at San Carlos. The hot summer weather was almost unendurable at that place, so it is probable they slipped away at that time. Geronimo, with his band, usually left at the beginning of summer. When winter set in and his people needed clothing and blankets, he brought them back. The White Eyes gave them some food, but never enough. All the while Geronimo was scheming, planning, recruiting men for his band, getting ammunition from the soldiers.

At San Carlos my father married a Chiricahua girl and they had two children. He told my mother that he did not steal her. He never stole anybody but my mother, and the story of that comes

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A typical Apache village, warriors and children.

later. He paid this girl's father with horses, as an Apache should. She became the friend of Gray Lizard, and welcomed him to their tepee as Chiricahuas do.

Geronimo had demanded that his people be removed from San Carlos and finally got them settled at Turkey Creek, near Fort Apache. That was a mountainous country, with good water and grass, and plenty of game. The band planted corn and raised crops, and for a time things were peaceful and pleasant. But the Chiricahua scouts constantly stirred up trouble with the people on the reservation. They lied to Chihuahua and Naichi; told Geronimo that he was to be hanged. Geronimo took his warriors and left. My father stayed with his family. He did not join in the fighting that followed.

Once a week a member of each family went to the agency for supplies. Orders were issued to bring everybody, and this made the Indians suspicious. But they went to the agency, unarmed, and mounted soldiers herded them like cattle into the corral. Then they were put into wagons and hauled north to Holbrook, in Navajo country. There, they were driven onto the train and told that they were en route to Florida to join Geronimo, who had been captured. Chihuahua and many Warm Springs Apaches had also been shipped to Florida. All Chiricahuas were to be sent to be prisoners in Florida, whether or not they had been at war with the soldiers. The scouts too were herded aboard the train, headed for exile in Florida. So did the White Eyes reward those Apaches who had betrayed their own people to help them.

Gray Lizard was in the same car with my father and his family. Massai's wife knew that she could not leave the children and escape with her husband, but she urged Gray Lizard to attempt it.

"We will have to loosen the bars on the window when the guards are not close at hand," said my father. "We will have to choose a time to escape when the train is going up a long slope. Like a horse it will have to slow down. We cannot jump off with it going like the wind, on the level or down hill."

There seemed to be no place suited for the escape attempt, yet they spent three days cautiously loosening the bars when the guards' backs were turned. Then one morning Massai saw low mountains in the east. They were, he guessed, almost a day's journey away. That evening, if ever, he and Gray Lizard must make the attempt to leave the train.

A Chiricahua scout went through the car. A prisoner himself, he taunted the other prisoners. "When you get to Florida, the soldiers will chop your necks off," he gloated. "All who wear red handkerchiefs around their heads will have their necks chopped."

"You wear a red cord," retorted Massai. "If the soldiers do not get you first, I will strangle you with it!"

All the scouts wore the red head cord.

When food was brought at noon Massai pretended to eat, but concealed most of his portion in his breechclout. His wife gave him her share, for she would get more that night. Lizard, too, did not eat.

The train began laboring up the slope, moving more and more slowly as it climbed. Massai looked for a place where there was much vegetation in which he could hide. They came to clumps of bushes, with few rocks. The train slowed almost to a stop, and Massai and Gray Lizard slipped through the window and dropped to the ground. They rolled down the slope into the thick brush and lay still. Neither was hurt. The train did not stop. They saw it disappear over the hill, then wriggled through the vegetation to thicker shelter and hid there until dark. Then they walked toward the low mountains to the southwest and by morning had crossed the little valley and were half-way up the slope. There they ate, drank, and slept.

They had hoped to find Indians on those mountains, but saw no sign of any but white people. When they came near a log cabin they circled around it. They avoided lights until they saw the smoke of a camp fire. That might indicate Indians, so they crept close enough to the blaze to smell mutton cooking and coffee boiling. That night instead of moving on, they lay hidden near the camp.

AT daybreak they saw that the campers were white men, and suspected that they were miners. If so, they would leave the camp during the day, leaving their supplies unguarded.

Massai and Gray Lizard watched the three men cook breakfast. They could smell the coche frying, and the smell made their mouths water. They were so hungry they could have eaten pork, much as they abhorred it. Finally the men finished their breakfast, took their picks and shovels and went up the mountain.

When they were out of sight, Massai led the way to the camp. There was cold mutton and bread, even some hot coffee left in the pot. Best of all, there were rifles. Massai and Gray Lizard each took a .30-30 and all the ammunition they could find. They took cartridge belts and two knives. They cut meat from a sheep carcass hanging in a tree, put the food in flour sacks and each carried one.

Then they walked until they were tired and hungry, traveling mostly at night until they were out of the timber. Still sleeping or resting during the day, they moved on at night through open country. They found a trail where the

(Continued on page 8)

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Y'all gather 'round, now! Hush your fuss and keep your ears bent for listening. Here comes a genuine old pot-wrastler with complete and fool-proof advice on how to prepare

SOURDOUGH FIXIN'S

BY MARK TREY

HUNDREDS of thousands of Americans living today have never tasted "sourdough" bread, biscuits or flapjacks. Many more thousands do not even know of such a process of making bread or its equivalent. A large number of people are uninformed or misinformed about the true origin and history of the term "sourdough," and believe that it is merely a nickname applied to Western miners and prospectors. It just so happens that the coinage and currency of this simple term, often applied facetiously today, involves a wealth of typical American folklore of the past, and also a culinary treasure of pleasure which is available today.

Contrary to general assumption, sourdough is not and never was exclusively monopolized by miners and prospectors, nor by any other special element of the far West or Northwest. Sourdough bread, biscuits and flapjacks belong to *all the West*. They helped to develop the West, not only before and during the great gold rushes of California and Alaska, but for many decades afterward.

Sourdough was carried in cooking outfits by the freighters of the early West who hauled supplies to the pioneer settlements, Army posts and mining camps from the nearest railroad town or river town, sometimes hundreds of miles distant.

These old long-line skinners drove twenty head strung out on three wagons through rugged, hostile and uninhabited territory, on journeys which sometimes required weeks, pitching their camps wherever nightfall found them, beside the nearest stream or waterhole.

The rear wagon was equipped with a cabinet on the back, similar to that on a cowboy chuck-wagon, and his cabinet contained—in addition to other cooking paraphernalia—a stone jar partly full of sourdough. The jar was well packed and insulated against the jolting of the wagon, and well protected from dust and extreme temperatures. In fact, this source of the skinners' daily "Staff of Life" was nursed with a tenderness and care almost equal to that which would have been accorded an infant.

At the end of a long day's journey, after the skinner had unharnessed and cared for his whole herd of horses, he prepared his own meal over a campfire on the ground near the cabinet. His culinary implements and utensils were meager, but there was only one item which was important, for his only bread throughout the entire trip consisted of sourdough biscuits baked in a Dutch oven in a pit of live coals.

CATTLEMEN of the Old West carried sourdough in their chuck-wagons or upon pack mules. Prospectors carried it on their burros. In the latter two cases, when carried upon animals, only a "starter" was transported in a glass fruit jar with a screw top slightly perforated for the escape of gases. When the new camp was set up, the sourdough starter was then replenished and the volume increased in a large container.

Many trappers kept sourdough at their headquarters camp and baked enough bread or biscuits in advance to have a surplus for their lunch on long trap-lines.

Sourdough was even preferred by many housewives and permanently stationed ranch cooks—including Chinese—over all other methods of making bread or its equivalent. It was quicker to prepare, far less troublesome, and it produced a he-man, stick-to-your ribs, satisfying morsel with a distinctive flavor and aroma all its own. It was still perfectly palatable after it was cold and several days old. This latter feature was very important to the cooks and very popular with ranch hands, buckaroos, and other outdoor men who were required to carry cold lunches.

And so we find that the much publicized "Sourdough Miner" was not the only duck in the sourdough puddle by any means. Nor is sourdough baking a lost art, despite its apparent obscurity and misconception.

Sourdough products can be enjoyed today by Easterners as well as Westerners, and the former need not subscribe or travel to so-called "Dude Ranches" with all their hocus-pocus and synthetic atmosphere. The art may be adopted and mastered by any competent cook in the most modern city home, but it really is most enjoyed in an outdoor setting, whether in a backyard barbecue patio, picnic grounds, or a hunting, fishing or tourist camp.

Sourdough is a perpetual nucleus maintained by fermentation process very similar to that of yeast dough, but it differs from yeast bread in that it does not require starting from scratch every time. After it is once started to working, it can be perpetuated with very simple material and ingredients that are usually available in almost any kitchen or outdoor camp.

With reasonable care it is always ready and rarin' to go—to the oven. So long as a starter is retained and replenished each time a portion is extracted for baking, it may be used twice a day—early morning and late evening—for making bread, biscuits or flapjacks. It requires several hours for working and maturing between extractions.

If a good baking oven is not available, a heavy cast iron Dutch oven will serve just as well—in fact, even better if used right. Sourdough biscuits and a Dutch oven go together like chicken and dumplings or ham and eggs. Dutch oven baking technique will be fully explained a little later, but now let's start at the beginning of the whole process.

The first requirement—and a "must" with no alternative or substitute—is a stone or glass jar of considerably more capacity than the sourdough will actually occupy at the outset, in order to allow plenty of room for expansion without overflowing. Lively sourdough will expand to double its original volume or more at its peak of activity.

A one gallon jar will take care of the

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needs of from two to six people. A two gallon jar will suffice for most large families or groups, but if an outdoor barbecue party or an extra large group of indoor guests are to be satisfied, the size of the jar should be increased accordingly. It is much better and safer to use a jar that is too large than too small.

DO NOT under any circumstances ever use any kind of metal container or allow the sourdough to contact metal at any stage during the fermentation process. Contact with metal at this time will definitely poison the sourdough and render it unfit and unsafe for use thereafter. After it is removed from the jar, and during the short temporary process of forming the sourdough into loaves or biscuits, and during the actual baking, this rule does not apply. We are referring to active working stage only.

Obviously, most mixing pans, baking pans, and Dutch ovens are made of metal, but during this short period the sourdough is insulated by flour and grease.

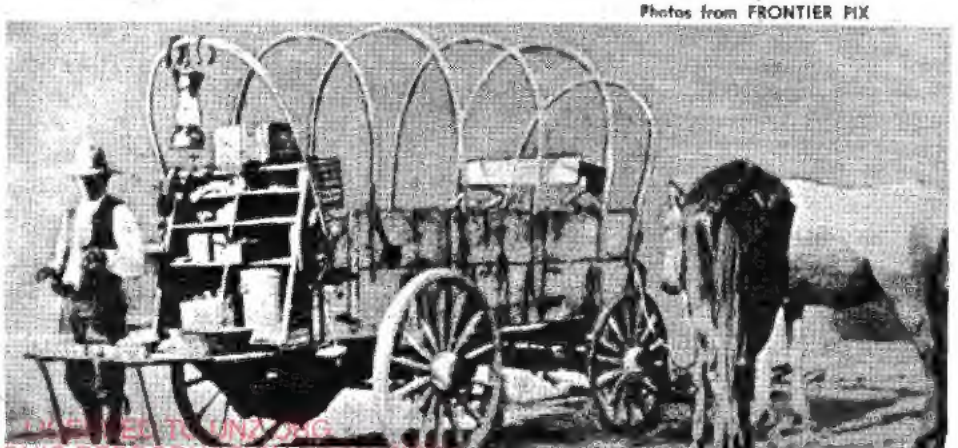
Neither should other substitutes for stone or glass be used for the working container. Plastic or wood will not necessarily poison the sourdough but will give it an unpleasant flavor. Granite containers may develop a chipped spot, unnoticed, thereby exposing the raw iron beneath. People will try to tell you that certain substitutes for stone or glass are just as good, but pay them no heed. We want this adventure to be absolutely safe, sanitary and successful.

The stone or glass jar should have plenty of depth, a wide open mouth which provides easy access for stirring and pouring, and a loose-fitting lid,

(Continued on page 11)

Above: LIT Ranch cowboys in the Texas Panhandle at mealtime in the 80's. Below: This is John Custer's chuckwagon that made three trips up the famous cattle trails to market. Photo made by N. H. Rose while on exhibit at Old Time Trail Drivers Convention, San Antonio, Texas, 1917.

Photos from FRONTIER PIX



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Massai — Broncho Apache

(Continued from page 5)

deer came to water and killed one, taking all the meat they could carry and burying the rest. The stomach of the deer was cleaned for use as a water bag.

I do not know how long it took them to get back to the Rio Pecos, but it was a long time. Gray Lizard, who was carrying the water, fell against a prickly pear and tore a hole in the bag. Now they had no water, but they kept moving. They hoped to kill an antelope, but did not see any although they were in antelope country.

My father was making medicine, and so was Gray Lizard. And Yusen heard, for soon a heavy rain began to fall. They made a hole in the ground to catch it. After drinking all the water they could, they kept walking to the west. Their guide was the Dipper, for Indians know the stars and use them for directions.

Finally they came to the Pecos, recognizing it by the bad taste of the water. Now they were sure they were not far from the Mescalero country. Next morning they saw a dark cloud looming to the southwest, a cloud that gradually resolved into distant mountains. The Capitans! They were almost to Apache country. They were not Mescaleros, but all Apaches are brothers. They prayed to Yusen, thanking Him for giving them the strength and courage to reach their homeland. That is the Apache way. There are many who make medicine when they need help, but few who remember to thank Him later, even for saving their lives.

In the Capitans, they stopped for a day's badly needed rest, for they knew the White Eyes could not catch them there. Later they killed a deer and feasted. Some time later they crossed Capitan Gap and saw the beautiful White Mountain.

"It is not far now to Mescal Mountain," said Lizard. "We can make it easily."

"It is there that the soldiers will look for me," said my father. "I will stay on the White Mountain, at least until the search is ended."

"It will never end," answered Lizard. "Our people are there. You want to see your parents, don't you?"

"Yes, but I do not want to be captured and sent to Florida."

"Nor do I. But the scouts said that all but the Chiricahuas were to be turned loose. I am a Tonkawa and they will not take me."

"Go to your people, then, if you are so sure you will not be hunted. I will stay on White Mountain until the search is ended."

But Gray Lizard persisted. "The White Eyes will not know how you look. Your wife said that after our escape she would tell the guards that you are a big tall man like Naichi, when they called your name and you did not answer. Maybe that will keep the White Eyes from finding you."

"Perhaps," replied Massai wearily. "But I will stay here awhile. We will go to the north of the White Mountain, and around to the west side. There we will part. I hope that some day we may meet again and be as brothers, as we always have."

The next day they divided the food and ammunition, and filled their new deer stomach water bag for Lizard. They prayed to Yusen for their reunion and then, in the Apache custom, they embraced and parted.

Massai stood on the slope above Three Rivers and watched Gray Lizard walk away toward the White Sands. He would go, he knew, by the Malpais Spring and our sacred peak in the San Andreas. Then, since he was not a Chiricahua, Gray Lizard would be safe with our people at Mescal Mountain. But my father would be an exile hunted like an animal as long as he lived.

Heavy hearted, Massai climbed the ridge of the White Mountain and descended the slope into the Rinconada. It was well named, for it is so secluded that to this day few people have seen that beautiful valley, nestled high on the peak.

In the Rinconada there is a little stream, grass, pinions, mesquite and greasewood. Game abounded there. Difficult of access from any point, it was a good place for my father to hide. He found a cave near a little pool where the deer came to drink, and began preparing for winter. He knew that he was not out of danger even in this wild, lonely spot, for Fort Stanton was only a few miles away and the cavalrymen liked to hunt. The report of his rifle might disclose his hiding place to a wandering hunter, so he made a bow and arrows for killing deer. He dried meat and tanned hides until he had a good supply. He was free—but terribly lonely. He knew that he would never see his wife and children again, and also that his wife would think him dead and marry again.

So it was with great happiness that he saw the ripening of the pinions that fall. Pinions bear perhaps one year out of four or five, but that fall there was a big crop. Massai knew that the Mescaleros would come to harvest them. They were Apaches and his brothers. They would not betray his presence to the soldiers unless they happened to be scouts. He would recognize the scouts by the red head cords and ammunition belts they wore. Badly as he needed ammunition, he would not kill a scout unless attacked. Even if a scout were ambushed and killed silently with arrow or knife, his comrades would miss him and track down his slayer.

ONE morning, from his lookout ledge, Massai saw Mescalero women and children riding up horseback to camp only a short distance from his cave. For three days he watched, but no men joined them. He had food, but the smell of their boiling coffee tantalized him. More than anything else, he craved association with his people. Finally, on an evening when he could stand his loneliness no longer, he slipped quietly toward the camp.

Two women sat by the fire. Little children, wrapped in their blankets, lay with their feet toward the warmth. One of the women was telling them the legend of their people. The scene was so sweet and homelike, Massai felt his eyes mist and a lump come into his throat. He called to the women. They stood in alarm, and the children sat up in their blankets.

"Do not be afraid," he said softly. "I will not harm you."

He arose and walked toward them. When they saw he was an Apache they were not afraid. The children smiled and the women stood with shyly downcast eyes.

"Will my brother sit and eat?" invited one of the women.

"I have eaten. I have not tasted coffee for a long time."

She poured the hot liquid into a gourd and handed it to him. He drank slowly, enjoying the delicious flavor.

"Enjuh!" he said. "I cannot say how good it tastes."

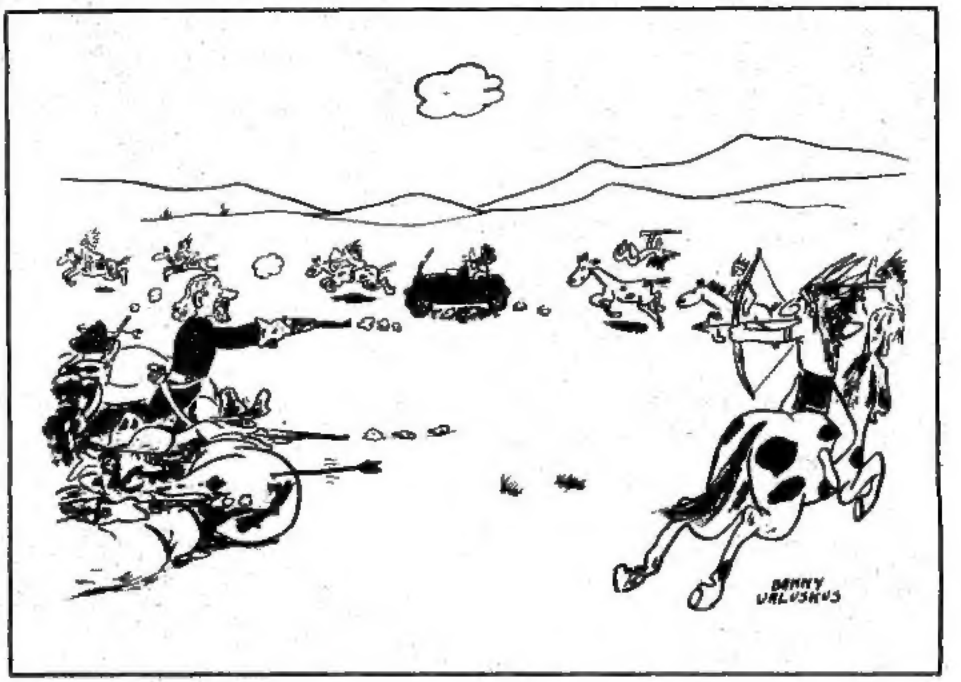
Then he sat across the fire from the women and visited with them. They were sisters who had come to gather pinions. There were no White Eyes in that place, so they had nothing to fear.

"You are brave women; don't you fear strange Apaches?"

One of the women, the wife of Big Mouth, smiled and shook her head. "Now that my brother is close, we feel very safe."

Nor was there reason for them to fear Apaches, even strange Apaches, for they did not molest women. Other bad things they sometimes did, but they did not molest women. Not even white women.

When Massai rose to leave, they gave him all the coffee they had brought. He



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thanked them and left. As he went back to his cave, he thought of the women and of his lonely life and tried to put the thought out of his mind. He knew too that they would not betray him to the White Eyes.

He did not come again to their camp, nor did he visit any of the others who came to harvest the pinion nuts. He did not hunt while they were there. But when he thought all had left the Rinconada, he took his rifle and concealed himself at the pool where the deer came to drink. He concealed himself and waited.

Massai may have slept, for a splash in the pool suddenly alerted him. Three young women were bathing in the pool. He did not move, for according to age-old tribal law spying upon women was punishable by death. Yet he watched fascinated as the girls bathed; then got out of the water, dressed, and took down their long hair and braided it. An idea possessed Massai. Already he had forfeited his life; he would take one of these young women. He jumped from his place of concealment and reached the startled girls.

"Come!" he ordered the first.

"Do not take me, my baby would die," she pleaded.

He turned to the next. She stood transfixed like a frightened deer, slender and beautiful, poised for flight. Her long braids swept the ground. Massai caught the end of one and motioned her to walk in front of him.

The others followed, pleading with him not to take her. He motioned them to leave. "Do not take her," one begged.

"Shall I take *you* instead?" he asked grimly.

They turned and fled.

With his rifle Massai motioned his captive on. They climbed to the mouth of the cave. He took the knife from her belt and tied her in the cave. Then he took food and water and placed them within reach of her.

"Here you will sleep tonight," he told her. "There are blankets to keep you warm."

He slept lying across the cave entrance that night. Awaking at sunrise, he lay for some time watching Holos brighten the east with his fiery glow and thinking out his future plans. Finally he arose, his mind made up.

Working quickly, Massai packed his supplies on a wild horse he had tamed, then returned to the cave and motioned to the girl to make ready to travel. He freed her and waited outside the cave for her.

Both walked beside the laden packhorse, heading up the trail and crossing the ridge between the Rinconada and Three Rivers. All that day they walked. Massai wanted to get beyond reach of pursuit that he knew would come. He took the winding trail between the White Sands and the Malpais, walking on the rock as much as he could. He knew that trail and where to find water. Late that night he tied the girl, hobbled the horse, and they slept a few hours.

Before daylight they took the trail again. In the foothills of the San Andreas was water; there they camped and rested. Massai tied the girl to a tree while he hunted, telling her that if she escaped he would follow and kill her.

During the journey she spoke only in answer to questions, and then in monosyllables. After a week's traveling, Massai asked: "Have I mistreated you?"

She shook her head.

"Why, then, will you not talk to me?"

She raised her head to look him straight in the eyes. "You brought me by force. An Apache does not do that."

"Would you have come otherwise?"

"No!"

"Listen to me, then! It is true I took you, but I have respected you. Now, unless you continue the journey to my people willingly, I will give you the horse and food. You will be free to return to your home. If you go to my people, my mother will make the wedding feast for us. It is for you to decide."

My mother lowered her head.

"Which is it to be?" Massai's voice was stern, but my mother looked up into his eyes and saw what was in his heart.

"I will go with you," she murmured.

For the rest of the journey she rode the horse. She was happy, for—despite all—she knew that my father was a good man.

Massai's mother made the feast as she had promised, so that all the people of Mescal Mountain knew that this was a marriage. There were no vows to be broken, as White Eyes do. To Apaches, marriage is a sacred thing—not to be lightly undertaken nor ended. And though Massai had a wife, though he might never see her again, there was no obstacle to his marriage. Such was the custom of my people.

And so they were married.

THE years passed and my father and mother were very happy together; happier still when we children came. But still my father had to dodge the White Eyes, for the danger of discovery always threatened him. One dark day we fled Mescal Mountain to seek safety in the back country. Food was scarce on the trail; I remember clearly my father coming back to camp one day empty-handed.

He carefully placed his bow and arrows beside the rifle he had left with my mother; then seated himself with his back against a pine. I ran to him and nestled against his chest. He cuddled me in his strong arms and bent his head over mine.

"My little daughter, I brought no food. The deer have gone to the high mountains."

"You brought yourself; that is better."

"She speaks true, Massai," said Zan-a-go-li-che, my mother. "When you are with us we can endure hunger."

My father smiled tenderly at her. "You are a good wife, and my children are good. I am sorry you must share my danger."

My mother's face was beautiful to see. "Danger, like happiness, is to be shared, my husband."

As she spoke, she slipped the tsach from her back and took the baby from it. My little brother was old enough to walk and he liked to be free of his cradle. Zan-a-go-li-che reached for the buckskin food bag and gave each of us one handful of pulverized, dried venison, and mesquite bean meal. We dared not build a fire, but this is a good food raw and very nourishing. Though the portion did not satisfy our hunger, nobody asked for more. Each knew that when food was available there was no need to ask, for our mother fed us when she could.

My older brother, who was later named Albert, had brought a wicker jug of water from the spring. (Apaches did not use much pottery because they moved constantly and it was easily broken. They coated the reed jugs inside and out with pinion gum. The mouth was narrow and could be closed with a handful of the fine grass which they also used for packing the babies in the tsachs).

After we had drunk and lain on the ground, my father spoke:

"I should have left Mescal Mountain when the warnings first came. When Yusen speaks, the Apache should obey. He warned me first by the twitching of the eyelid that always means one is to see danger. But I knew that old Santos (a Mexican friend of the family) could not live long, and I would not leave him."

He was silent, staring, into the darkness. We waited.

"Now the White Eyes are on our trail," he went on. "Two mornings past, when I went to the place where I had hidden the horses, a man tried to ambush me. Not till he raised his rifle was I sure that he had seen me. Then I had no choice—I had to kill him. You heard the shots and asked why I wasted bullets on a deer. There was no deer, but a man."

My mother spoke. "His horse?"

"It got away."

"It will go home and there will be soldiers on our trail from his place."

"Yes; sheriffs too, perhaps. Cowboys maybe—and those I dread more than any soldiers."

There was silence again for a long moment. "They cannot know who fired the shot," ventured my mother.

My father's laugh was short and bitter. "When has there been a White Eye killed west of the Rio Bravo that his death has not been charged to Massai? When have I not been hunted like an animal?"

"But soldiers and Chiricahua scouts, too, came into our rancheria and did not find you, even though you were present when they inquired."

"They were looking for a tall man—one like Naichi—not for a short thin one like me."

"Why?"

"My friends, who were left on the train after my escape, must have told them I was very large to protect me from being caught."

My mother said no more. After a time my father spoke again: "I must tell you that Yusen has again warned me. This time He has spoken clearly so that there can be no mistake. I am not to reach Mescalero; I may not reach the Rio Bravo with you. But we are only one day's journey from the village of which I have told you."

He turned to Albert.

"My son, you are young to become the protector of your mother and the younger children. But you are well trained. Always I have foreseen the need and have made a brave of you, boy though you are. You are skillful with both bow and rifle. Bullets are swift and far-reaching, but arrows are silent and sure. Remember to use the rifle only when attacked by White Eyes. For game—the bow. It will obtain food for you."

"My father, I hear," replied Albert.

"I may not return in the morning. If I do not, take your mother and the children to the Mexican village on the Rio. Stay hidden in the brush until dark, for there may be White Eyes at that town. Watch for a house where there is

no man, no big boy. Then, after dark, tap on the door and in the language of Santos, ask for help.

"I have talked with those who know the place. The railroad crosses the river there on a trail built of logs. You too can cross that trail, no matter if the river is high. Hide by day and travel by night toward the Rising Sun till you reach the spring at the foot of the mountains. Your mother knows that place. Stay by the water until you can kill game. Then head for the White Mountain and skirt it to the south. There you will find a trail into the Rinconada. Your mother knows that place also."

I saw my mother's sad face light in a smile of happy memory.

"From there she will guide you to her family. Stay on the Mescalero Reservation. It is my order."

"It will be obeyed, my father. But the horses?"

"You may not have the horses. The White Eyes cannot trail us, but they may be able to follow horses. I am telling you what to do if that happens."

My mother pulled the blanket over her face. My father went on, speaking quietly. "In the early morning I will go to the place where we hid the horses. You are to remain here. It is my order."

My brother bowed his head.

"If I do not return, my son, you are not to wait—you are to leave at once. It is safe to travel by day because of the dense undergrowth. Now we must sleep. I have spoken."

When I awoke it was still dark, but my mother was sitting up, listening.

"My brother?" I whispered.

She laid her finger on my lips. "He followed your father. Hush. . . "

I huddled close to her in fear and she drew me under her blanket. The others slept. Just as the first gray light stole into the east I heard a shot, then another, crashing loud in the stillness. My mother hugged me to her. She made no noise, but her body shook.

IT was daylight when I heard the light patter of moccasins. I touched my mother in the darkness. Soon my brother crept through the dense brush and joined us.

"They killed him?"

"I think so. The White Eyes had trailed the horses and were waiting for us. As he reached to untie his bay, there was a shot and he fell. Even as he did so he called to me to run. I did. I crossed the little hill and slid down the high, steep bluff. Then I circled widely, walking on the rock ledge so that they might not be able to follow. Let us start now, as he commanded."

My mother shook her head. "He may not be dead. I cannot go till I know."

"They will be hunting for us. We must go!"

"Not even to save you children can I leave now. Take them and I will stay. Go to my people, as he told you. I do not fear death."

"But the baby! My sisters!"

"We will all stay. What does death mean now, that Massai is gone? I hope he is dead. Death is better than being a captive of the White Eyes."

We lay in the thick brush at the edge of the mesa and watched. There was a camp in the canyon, with many men and horses. Scouts left the camp, fanning out in all directions; some horseback and some walking. Toward evening they came straggling back.

My mother again gave each of us a handful of our emergency rations. We drank from the jug; and with the remaining water mother bathed the baby, warming the water in her mouth and letting it trickle over his little body. Then she wiped him dry with soft, clean grass and packed him again in the tsach. He wore no clothing, but she covered him with the soft skin of a lynx before lacing the buckskin straps across him.

Mescalero woman and baby.

The White Eyes were building a big fire—a much bigger fire than was needed for cooking. It burned far into the night, and must have been frequently replenished. Not even White Eyes kept a big fire going all night. I wondered why these were so foolish. Twice I awakened to find my mother still sitting, still watching.

Next morning we could see nothing, for the canyon was filled with fog. When it lifted there were no White Eyes, no horses, and only a little smoke.

My mother spoke. "I will go down and see if I can find his body. It must have burial. No Apaches would leave a relative or even a friend to the coyotes and vultures."

"But they may be waiting to ambush us," my brother objected.

"True. We must wait, keep careful watch all day. If we see nothing, we will risk going tomorrow."

"We are almost out of food," said my brother.

"Keep watch. I will try to find something."

"Let me try to kill a rabbit, mother?"

"Are we animals to eat raw meat? You know that we cannot cook it. No Apache would eat raw meat. There is still enough food for each to have a small bit. I will try to find some roots."

"Do not leave us, mother. On the way tomorrow we may find cactus food."

She sat down beside us and covered her head.

That night we went to bed without eating; the food must be saved for morning so that we would have strength for the walk. We had water—and with that alone an Apache can endure much hunger.

My brother spoke again before we slept. "My father was a good man. Why did the White Eyes hate him, hunt him like a mad wolf, and finally kill him?"

"It is a hard thing to understand, my son. We cannot know why they want to kill all Apaches. Already they have robbed us of everything we had; our game, our land, our freedom. It was not enough. They want our lives also. That is all I can tell you."

"May I go with you to the camp, mother?"

"Yes, my son. Very early in the morning. Try to sleep now . . ."

I think my oldest sister was about twelve. (We kept no records, of course.) She kept the baby and we three younger girls while my mother and brother were gone. We did not ask to go, we did not cry. Apache children do not disobey, they do not argue.

We huddled under the blankets until they returned. My mother carried a sack of meal and she gave each of us some of the food before she spoke. We ate it very slowly and when we had finished she gave us more.

"There is some for morning," she said.

We wanted to know about our father, but she did not tell us till long after. They had approached the camp cautiously, even after they felt sure there was no one there. They crept to the still-smoldering fire.

My mother took a long stick and stirred the ashes. There were partially burned sticks among them—and something else. Bones—charred bones. She raked them out of the ashes, laying them aside in a little heap. She tried to get every fragment. With them she found a small, blackened object—the buckle of an ammunition belt. She recognized the buckle by a dent made by a deflected bullet. She held it in her hands and talked to it:

"This is all I have left of you, my husband. All these years you took care of me and the children, and were kind to us. Now you are nothing but bones and ashes.

"The White Eyes thought you a bad man and hunted you like an animal. They shot you down like a wild beast. They burned you, so that in Yusen's land you would have no body. But Yusen knows all things and He can make you another body. To Apaches, the man who bravely defends his family, his home, and his people is a good man. He will not walk in darkness. To Yusen you are a good man. To me you are a good man, for I am an Apache. And I call to Yusen to avenge your death.

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"I have nothing but this buckle and your memory. That is a good memory; one for your children to cherish. I have nothing to give your children but that memory, but it is enough. It will always give them courage. It will give them respect for the memory of their father.

"Right now your spirit may be here, listening. I cannot go with it on its journey, but always we will be with your memory."

She fastened the buckle to her belt with her knife and fire sticks. Then she wrapped the bones carefully in her shawl, and she and Albert scooped out a hole with their hands and a sharp stone and buried what was left of my father there. They heaped stones upon the grave, and left him to make The Journey. No horse. No weapons. Not even a body. But Yusen would know that an Apache and a brave warrior came. Yusen would understand.

We started toward the Rio. My mother carried the baby on her back and the rifle in her hands. Albert went ahead with his bow and spear. My oldest sister had one blanket; the rest we had to leave for we had no way to transport them. Cora had the water jug, and the third girl the food bag. I walked till I was exhausted, and then they took turns carrying me for short distances. We kept on the ridge as long as we could, and then stole from one clump of vegetation to another until we got near the village. We hid in a big clump of underbrush near San Marcial while my brother crept close and scouted the place.

He was gone about an hour; it was dark when he returned.

"There is one White Eye family at the tepee where the train stops," he reported. "The rest are Mexican. There are men at every house but one—that of an old woman at this edge of the rancheria."

"We go to that tepee," said my mother, "and ask for help."

When we tapped on the door a voice asked, "Quien es?"

In Spanish, mother replied: "A woman and children, cold and hungry."

The door opened.

"Pasen," said the old woman.

Sourdough Fixin's

(Continued from page 7)

although a clean cloth cover will suffice if no lid is available. The cover is very important because fermentation attracts flies and insects, and also because sourdough in an uncovered receptacle will form a hard crust over the top and around the sides. If sourdough is kept covered, it will remain soft, moist and uniform throughout.

At last we are ready to test our ingenuity as a chemist, domestic scientist and caterer to the envious appetites of favorite friends or guests, and to earn the coveted title of "sourdough sage" among cake eaters and cookie dunkers. All set? Okay, then, let's go!

The next time you boil *peeled* potatoes, save the water and any potato sediment that remains in the water. The sediment will help to start off with a rich body which enhances the flavor. Allow the water to cool to a temperature just slightly more than tepid. Extremely hot water will kill your yeast, which we are just about to add.

While the water is cooling, dissolve a cake of fresh yeast—dry yeast may be used but will not act as quick or effectively—in a separate container, and when the water has cooled sufficiently, add the dissolved yeast solution and a bit of sugar and salt, stirring them well together in the jar.

At this point we must agree upon a fixed amount of the whole mixture in order to prescribe our ingredients accordingly. Using the one gallon jar for six people as a standard, the liquid in the jar—including the potato, water and yeast solution—should occupy approximately one-fourth of the space in the jar, or about one quart. This will allow for the addition of necessary flour and leave plenty of surplus space for expansion.

To the quart of liquid in the jar, add an average teaspoonful of salt and a heaping tablespoonful of sugar. When these are well stirred together and evenly distributed, add enough sifted flour to make a dough that will just barely drip from the mixing spoon. Stir the whole mixture until all the lumps of flour are dissolved and the batter is perfectly smooth and uniform. Then place the covered jar in a sheltered spot of moderate temperature, neither hot nor cold, but as near consistently uniform as possible.

IF it becomes necessary to maintain warmth during cold nights, wrap the jar in heavy cloth or enclose it within some other insulator during the cold period and remove it at other times. If the temperature around the jar becomes too cold, the sourdough will become soggy, sluggish and dormant. To revive it, add more yeast if available, but if not, remix the batter with warm potato water and adjust the proper consistency with a little dash of flour.

If the temperature around the jar becomes too hot, the sourdough will overwork, become too sour, and the solids will all settle to the bottom with the moisture on top. To revive it in this case, discard a portion of the dough entirely and remix the remainder with warm water in which a bit of baking soda and sugar have been previously dissolved.

When replenishing the batter each time after using the jar for baking, sweet milk is good as a liquid and sour milk may be used, providing it is not used too often in a short period, or when the dough is already too sour. Potato water is always best under all conditions, and plain water (lukewarm) may be used when the batter is at its maximum of efficiency.

When the original "starter" is first mixed in the jar, it should be allowed to work at least eight hours (longer is better) before it is used for baking. Also it is important to remember that the first batch or two of bread or biscuits will be in effect practically the same as yeast bread, and therefore will require very little baking soda. Only after the process of fermentation has been under way for some time will it really become "sourdough" and require the counteraction of soda.

"Thunderation, wake up, Slim, we've been robbed!"

All the foregoing details may appear by this time to be too much fuss and bother. But it must be borne in mind that we are *starting from scratch*; that many of these details will no longer apply or require consideration after the start is once made.

The amateur "sourdough artist" will soon learn a great deal from his own experience and practice. We are now merely trying to give him a good boost with all the fundamentals in advance. A recipe for the actual mixing and baking of a batch of biscuits would require only a few words, and the process itself requires only a few minutes. Also remember that it was not too much fuss and bother for cowpunchers, sheepherders, lumberjacks, forest rangers, freighters and prospectors, miles from civilization where they lacked convenient access to handy facilities and sources of supply.

And so, to follow through on our original plan of explaining every step in detail and in proper sequence, we come to the final process of actually preparing the sourdough for the finished product.

Assuming still that we are baking a batch of biscuits for six people, or its equivalent in bread, which would be approximately two loaves, we shall proceed accordingly. The process for baking a batch of biscuits or loaf bread is practically the same, except that the biscuit dough is not kneaded, and the loaves require slower baking over a longer period of time in order to bake clear through. As for flapjacks, the batter from the jar is merely mixed to a thinner consistency, with the same ingredients added, and beaten thoroughly with a spoon in a mixing bowl.

The "starter" which is left in the jar each time will vary, of course, with future plans. For example, if a large party is planned for the afternoon or evening meal, the sourdough should be tranferred the night before to a larger jar when it is last replenished, and none should be used on the morning of the party. So long as the sourdough is in good working condition and the demands made upon it are uniform and consistent, it will provide biscuits or flapjacks for the morning meal and again for late supper the same day.

Do not regard the container as a magic "Aladdin's Jar" which will produce miraculous results on the spur of the moment at any time by merely quoting the proper ritual. In order to get something out of it, you must put something into it, and allow plenty of time for it to work between extractions.

NOW we enter the final phase of our adventure, at the end of which lies a reward well worth the efforts any day.

Into a pan of hollowed out flour, pour a good half-gallon of sourdough from the jar, leaving approximately a quart for a starter. Upon the surface of the sourdough in the pan, sprinkle through the flour sifter (for even distribution) a level teaspoonful of baking soda—as-

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suming that the dough is well aged—and the same amount of sugar and salt. The amount of sugar and salt is largely a matter of individual taste rather than function, although the sugar helps to brown the bread. The amount of soda, on the other hand, is very important and should be gauged according to the condition of the sourdough. Lively sourdough in good working condition will not require as much soda as that which is abnormally sour. One can usually tell by smelling the dough in the jar approximately how much soda to use, and practice will perfect one's skill in time. Too much soda will turn the bread a yellowish-green color, while the right amount will leave it white, porous and fluffy.

Having distributed the soda, sugar and salt evenly upon the surface of the fresh sourdough in the pan, stir them well into the dough before it becomes too thick. The half-gallon of sourdough will absorb considerable flour in the process and increase a great deal in volume.

When the dough is no longer sticky and can be handled with the bare hands, form it into loaves or biscuits as the case may be. Loaves may be kneaded slightly to shape them firmly, but do not knead the biscuit dough. Also in the latter case do not use a cutter, but pinch them off and shape them gently in the hands, as a cutter will seal the pores around the edges and retard their rising.

Dip both sides of the biscuits in a baking pan containing a generous amount of previously melted fat, and place them lightly together without too much crowding. Then cover the pan with a clean cloth and place it in a warm spot for about twenty minutes to allow them to rise as much as possible. If the biscuits are to be baked in a stove oven, it should not be excessively hot at the start, but rather a moderate temperature on the increase when the pan is placed within. This will allow them to finish rising to a maximum before baking, and this also applies to loaf bread.

In case a Dutch oven is to be used out-of-doors, the following process will be found very practical and successful, whether performed in your own back yard or out in the wilderness.

The first and most important requirement is a good supply of red-hot coals, and in order to have them ready when needed, the fire should be built and heavily fueled well in advance. Half burned embers or particles of charred wood are not suitable for baking and will only result in failure and disappointment. Hardwood coals are best, but they are not imperative so long as the best advantage of softwood coals is taken. By advantage we mean they should be red-hot and ready when needed and should be transferred from the original fire-bed to the oven pit in the shortest time possible without fumble or delay.

For the Dutch oven pit, dig a small round hole in the ground with straight perpendicular sides and as uniform as possible. The pit should be only of sufficient capacity to receive the Dutch oven with surplus space of about three inches underneath, around the edges and over the top. Do not be generous with this surplus space or your biscuits will burn outside before they bake clear through.

Do not attempt to bake biscuits in this fashion with a Dutch oven made of light-weight material. Many polished metal and light metal Dutch ovens are on the market which are pretty to look at and are popular in modern kitchens, but they are positively not suitable for baking biscuits in a pit of live coals. We are striving throughout this discourse to eliminate every hazard and danger of disappointment.

OUR prescription insists upon a heavy *cast iron* Dutch oven with a standard type lid or cover which seats itself over the rim of the oven with a flange or lip, and which has a rigid ring on top that one can locate among the live coals. The bottom section must also have a bail. If the original bail has been lost or broken, make one out of heavy wire and replace it while the oven is cold.

These heavy cast iron Dutch ovens may be purchased at any well-stocked hardware store at a reasonable price, and they are very useful in camp for many other purposes besides baking—as a hot water reservoir and for frying, boiling, basting, broiling, stewing and roasting, to name only a few.

But right now we are going to use it to bake that batch of biscuits. First we pre-heat the whole Dutch oven, including the lid or cover by hanging it over the edge of the fire on a hook or setting it on the back of the grate with a liberal amount of lard, tallow or vegetable fat in' it.

By the time you have mixed and formed your biscuits, the oven will be hot enough to make them rise. Dip both sides of the biscuits in the melted fat as in the case of the baking pan, and place them lightly together, just tight enough to brace each other as they rise. Put on the cover of the oven and forget them for a few minutes while you attend to other chores.

Take a peek under the lid after a while—about fifteen minutes—and if the biscuits say "Howdy Do!" grab your shovel and scoot a good three inch layer of red hot coals into the bottom of the pit. Then lower the oven upon them dead center in the pit, fill in with more coals around the sides and over the top, leaving the ring of the lid protruding in plain sight so you won't have to go prospecting to locate it.

It is not necessary to seal the cover with dirt when baking. That's for long processes of cooking meats or other heavy foods which would allow the top coals to die before the contents are done. A three-inch layer of coals over the top will survive the baking process.

When the time is up, be sure to remove the live coals from the lid and around the rim before lifting it off for examination, or they will fall into the bread. Also do not disturb the bottom section of the oven until you are sure the biscuits are completely done. If they are not quite done, simply replace the bare lid for a few more minutes and the remaining coals underneath and around the sides will finish the job.

WHILE the biscuits are baking, let us digress for a moment to assure you that whatever may be your equipment, your location, your storage facilities, or your mode of transportation, sourdough will be no burden once you have thoroughly mastered the art as did the outdoor men of the Old West.

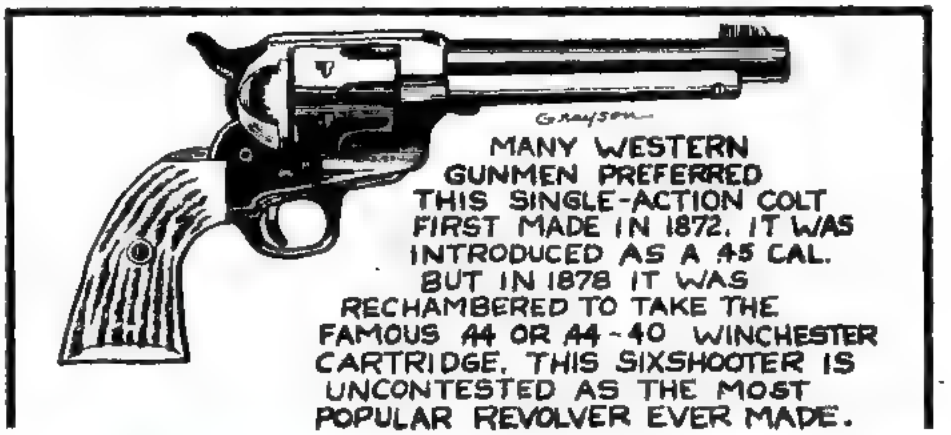
Also, whatever may be your appetite for baked goods at present, you have a rare treat in store for you. Sourdough products are not only more healthful than those produced by baking powder or other synthetic chemical processes, but they are genuinely nourishing and satisfying, and they have a distinctive flavor that lingers and delights the palate long after the meal is over.

So gather 'round here now, you cake-eaters, cookie-dunkers and cream-puff-munchers; we are about to teach you-all a new trick. It is typically an old American custom which originated in the Far West, but which, like many American customs and characters, has a tendency to migrate, gravitate, penetrate and disseminate throughout the nation as a whole. It comes to y'all today from the Deep South, traditional land of gracious living, where it has simply and unobtrusively retired among the shortenin' bread, corn pone and hush puppies.

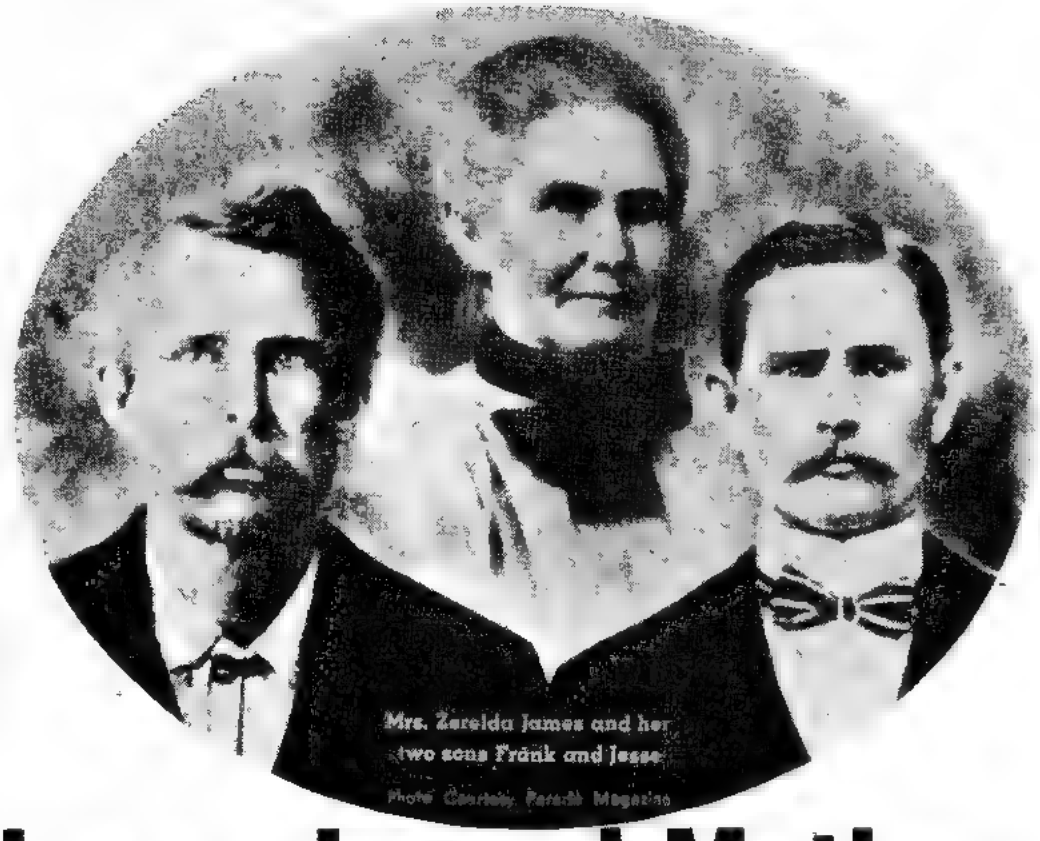
Suppose y'all just imagine that you are attending a huge convention in the Magic Convention City of Miami, and have already been entertained at huge outdoor barbecue parties which served bakery buns or at a great fish fry which served hush puppies. You may even have enjoyed the culinary delight of Southern fried chicken with buttermilk biscuits in a private home where the tradition of Southern hospitality is really taken seriously. You may have found satisfaction in any one of the many famous public eating places in the Greater Miami area—"Seven Seas," "Pickin' Chicken," "Hoffbrau Haus," "Old Scandia," "The (Vienna) Garden,"—but you ain't seen *nothin'* yet!

Our sourdough biscuits are now ready, and when we pull those overgrown nuggets out of the Dutch oven, the aroma itself will make you drool—and when you get your feet under the table and sink your teeth into one of these buttered beauties, you will soon know how come sourdough to be formerly associated with:

GOLD MINES, GOLD MINERS AND GOLD RUSHES.


MANY WESTERN GUNMEN PREFERRED THIS SINGLE-ACTION COLT FIRST MADE IN 1872. IT WAS INTRODUCED AS A .45 CAL. BUT IN 1878 IT WAS RECHAMBERED TO TAKE THE FAMOUS 44 OR 44-40 WINCHESTER CARTRIDGE. THIS SIXSHOOTER IS UNCONTESTED AS THE MOST POPULAR REVOLVER EVER MADE.

She was a crusty old soul; but you admired her no matter how else you felt



Mrs. Zerelda James and her two sons Frank and Jesse

Photo Courtesy, Parade Magazine

I Knew Jesse James' Mother

By HOMER CROY

Editor's Note:

April 13, 1959, marked the seventy-seventh anniversary of the death of Jesse James, notorious bank robber of the old West. Shot down by Robert Ford, a member of his own band, James soon became a legendary figure. Today the legend still is growing, and the facts sometimes are obscured. Here, for the first time, author Homer Croy (who wrote Jesse James Was My Neighbor and Last of the Great Outlaws) offers facts about the woman behind James—his mother.

WHAT an amazing woman Jesse James' mother was! I used to go to her house, and there she was—six feet tall, people said.

She had only one arm. That added immeasurably to the wonder and mystery of her, as I knew her as a boy. Her right arm had been blown off by sneaking Pinkerton detectives. That's what we called 'em . . . In some strange way, she was sensitive about her arm and used to stand with it turned away so people could not see the stump.

She had courage. When the detectives crept up and threw the black-powder bomb into her house, she darted out the door and there they were—ten detectives squatting in the yard, this January morning at dawn. She shook what was left of her arm at them and defied them with words you won't find in your Sunday School lessons.

She started back into the house—and stumbled over the body of her son Archie, killed by the detectives. He was nine years old. The amazing woman went back into the yard and once more defied the detectives, again waving that stump. That strange, fiery woman had qualities that we have to admire.

I think she was about the first college graduate I ever saw (except some of my teachers). She had gone to a Roman Catholic convent in Lexington, Kentucky. Her graduation diploma hangs on the wall of her old home today and there you can see it, if you amble by. Her name was Zerelda E. Cole.

There was a young fellow named Robert James going to Georgetown College in Georgetown, Kentucky. He met the saucy young college girl. You know what happened.

But getting married wasn't quite the matter it might seem. She was sixteen and an orphan. So she had a guardian who looked the young, would-be preacher over and said, "You may not be able to support her. You've got to up a bond of fifty pounds of tobacco before I'll let you marry her."

The boy dusted around and got the tobacco. So she was called "the tobacco bride."

THE guardian was her uncle, Jesse Cole. When a blue-eyed baby came along, she named him Jesse for her uncle. That's how the Jesse name got in.

The family was living in Missouri and Jesse's father was preaching right and left. He helped start a college which is going today—William Jewell College. There's a charter hanging on the wall and there's Jesse's dad's name as big as life. Seems odd, doesn't it, that Jesse's father would help start a religious college?

And there you have it: Jesse's father a preacher, his mother a college graduate.

"Aunt Zerel" had an almost square face, high cheekbones, blue eyes and a temper that would fry an egg. And that's exactly what Jesse had.

She was in a Yankee neighborhood and kept shouting for the South. One day some Union soldiers rode up to the house and asked for Jesse, who was then fifteen. He was in the field plowing. The men went out where he was and beat him with a rope till the blood ran down his back.

His mother came running, flew into the soldiers and gave them a tongue-lashing that shook the daisies. She was so mad, so bitter—this mother fighting for her son—that the soldiers threw her into jail for two weeks. Jesse was never in jail a day in his life. What a contrast!

She began to fight for her children. They were misunderstood. She was like a character out of the Bible, this strange woman fighting for her errant sons.

She wanted Jesse to be a preacher, like his father. And Jess (she always called him "Jess") was minded that way. He liked to sing hymns. Once, for a short time, in Callaway County, he taught singing school. He carried a tuning-fork in his pocket. He'd sound it and the singers would raise the roof.

At the close of the Civil War, Jesse was on the way to a schoolhouse to surrender, when some Union soldiers saw him and shot him through the lungs. This shows how deep the bitterness between the North and South was at this time in our section. He was nursed back to health by a cousin, whom he later married.

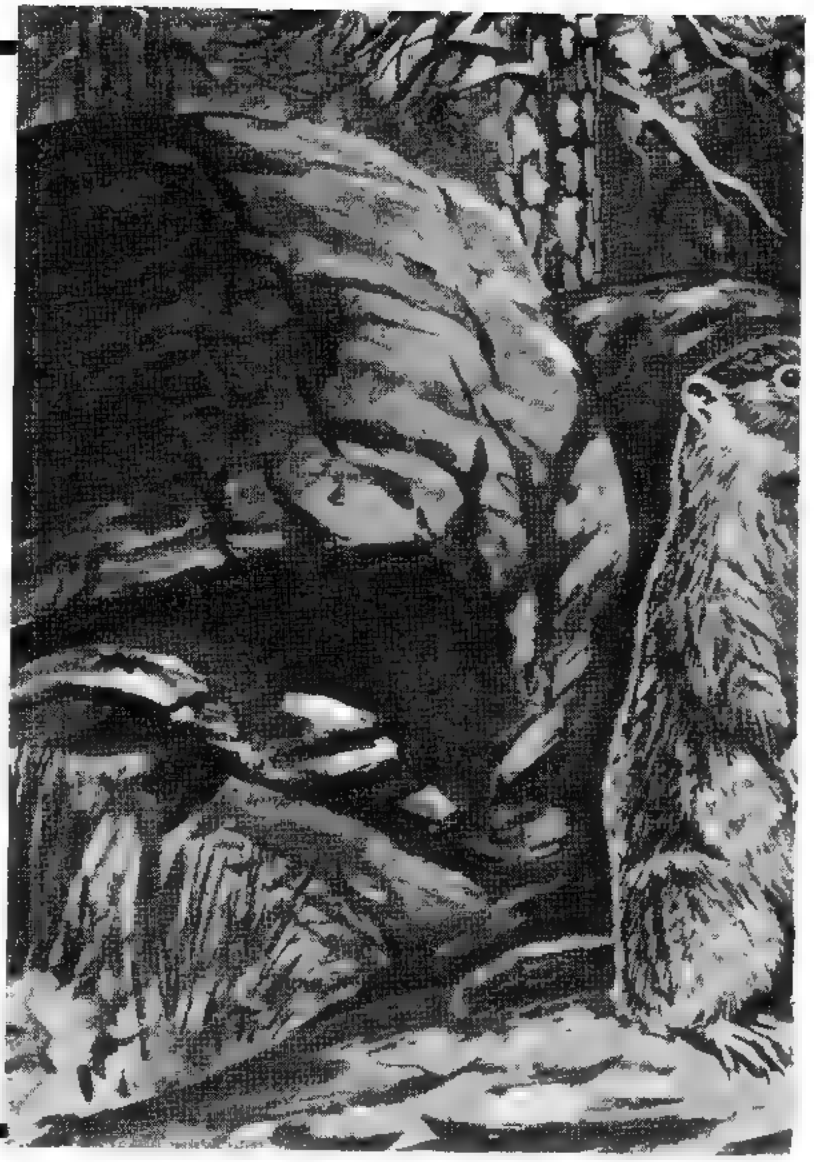
Aunt Zerel said that her two sons—

(Continued on page 26)

Groundhog's Gold

By TOM BAILEY

Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano



Somewhere in Colorado there's a mighty rich rodent. The tough thing to answer is "Where?"

PRACTICALLY every town or hamlet in the mineral belts of the West has a lost-mine story in its closet. If there hasn't been an authentic tale to tell the tourists, somebody thinks up one. With so many yarns floating about, it is difficult for a treasure hunter to determine where to start looking and where not to. Most of these stories are subject to skepticism unless backed up by irrefutable facts, and facts about lost treasures are hard to come by.

One such tale concerns a lost gold discovery in the old Fairplay district of Colorado and dates back to 1858. I am not going to tell you it's true, for I am not sure. It could be. I can only give you the known facts and let you be the judge. True or false, it still is one of the most fascinating lost-mine stories I know about.

Early in 1858 the Russell brothers, Green, Oliver and Levi, "raised color" on Cherry Creek, within the present confines of Denver, and on the Cache la Poudre, forty miles to the north. By Christmas several hundred impatient fortune-seekers had gathered in two small settlements on opposite banks of Cherry Creek close to its junction with the South Platte. Unable to search for gold because of the weather, these prospectors told and retold news of the big find, gradually exaggerating it out of proportion. By the time the stories reached the East, they were real whoppers, having little in common with actual fact.

All sorts of conveyances took to the Overland and Santa Fe Trails as early as February, 1859, and by late March hundreds of men, women and children had arrived, expecting to find the creeks full of gold. Badly disillusioned at finding that gold was scarce and the work to uncover it arduous, many returned to their homes in Missouri, Kansas, Illinois, Ohio and Kentucky. But enough remained to fill the mud hovels along Cherry Creek and in Denver City and Auraria.

Gold strikes were made, however, in South Park and along Boulder Creek, and finally all up and down the Rockies the precious metal began to be mined in earnest. Tarryall, Hamilton, Buckskin Joe, Fairplay, Golden, Gold Hill, Boulder, Colorado City and other settlements were established.

Among the newcomers were Adolph Hockmeyer and his sixteen-year-old daughter, Penelope. Hockmeyer, born in Germany, had come to this country as a young man and married an American girl in Philadelphia. Mrs. Hockmeyer died when Penelope was born in 1842 and Hockmeyer had educated the child in the best schools. He was a blacksmith by trade and established a shop in Fairplay.

There were few women in Fairplay so her father seldom let Penelope out of his sight. During the day when he was at work she tended the bellows in his shop and prepared the charcoal he needed for his forge.

ONE DAY a man known as Buzzard left a horse to be shod. The animal had been limping and Buzzard thought it needed a new set of shoes. Hockmeyer was surprised to find that a portion of the right hind hoof had been damaged and had festered badly under the shoe. Examining it, he found of all things—a gold nugget the size of a walnut!

The blacksmith decided to do nothing about replacing the shoe until the owner saw the cause of the animal's limp. No doubt the horse would have to be put on pasture for a time to let the sore heal.

Buzzard's real name has long since been forgotten. It was said that he acquired the name "Buzzard" because he often shot buzzards and ate them. Not even a coyote will eat a buzzard, so it would appear this man was not highly regarded in Fairplay. No physical description of him is available, except in a general way. He was tall, wore clothing made of animal skins and was a whisky drinker.

Buzzard had not returned by evening, so Hockmeyer decided to look for him in the saloons. He told Penelope to stay in the shop and explain what was wrong with the hoof if Buzzard returned be-

"As soon as the spring buds were out, Buzzard would make his way back to the place of his discovery."

fore he did.

At all the drinking places, Hockmeyer was told that Buzzard had been there and left.

"You should have been here," one bartender said. "He bought drinks for the house. Seems he struck it rich somewhere up the line. Threw a handful of nuggets on the bar and invited everybody to join him."

Hockmeyer returned to his shop and found it closed and locked. He thought Penelope had gone home but when he arrived the house was empty.

Inquiry around town failed to show any trace of the girl or of Buzzard's movements after he left the saloons. The word got out that Penelope had eloped with Buzzard, but Hockmeyer knew this could not be so. His daughter had been frightened by Buzzard's appearance and when asked by her father to remain at the shop had begged him to return as quickly as possible.

About midnight searchers came upon the girl's body in back of the blacksmith shop, badly mutilated with a knife. Hockmeyer was so overcome with grief he could not participate in the search for Buzzard, which lasted the rest of the night and into the following day. But no trace of the man could be found.

Another posse was organized the second day and scoured the countryside, but gradually the searchers gave up and returned to their own affairs. Hockmeyer's forge remained cold and his customers went elsewhere as he pursued the search for his daughter's slayer.

Then one day Buzzard entered one of the saloons and was quickly seized by the bartender and several citizens. He denied murdering Penelope Hockmeyer, and said he had gone to get his horse and the girl informed him of the trouble. He cleaned out the injured portion of the hoof, packed it with some cotton the girl gave him, and put the shoe back on. When he left, Miss Hockmeyer told him she was expecting her father but since he hadn't returned she was going to close the shop and walk home. "If you see my father," Buzzard quoted her as saying, "tell him he will find me at the house."

After leaving town, Buzzard said he had ridden to a friend's camp and stayed all night. This was verified by citizens who called on the friend. After holding Hockmeyer in the back of a saloon for two days, his captors decided to release him. Since there was no actual proof that he had murdered the girl, no one wanted to take the responsibility of hanging him. The fact he had returned to town after several weeks was another factor in his favor.

The girl could have been murdered by any of the many rough characters in town. With no doctor in town, autopsy had been impossible, so no one ever knew if the girl had been raped before she was slain. Perhaps the slayer, knowing that Penelope could identify him, had first raped and then killed her to save his own skin. It would have had to have been someone she knew, at least by sight.

IN TIME Hockmeyer returned to his forge and anvil. Meanwhile, the other men of Fairplay tried in vain to learn where Buzzard was getting his gold. Each time he came into Fairplay or its sister mining camp of Alma he spent nuggets like water. On one occasion he spent $5,000 on a binge that lasted two weeks. This was most unusual for a man who had lived frugally so many months through '58 and part of '59; it meant that his strike was of unusual size.

Wherever it was, it was some distance from Fairplay, far enough that he had to pack all his supplies on muleback. He appeared in Fairplay at least once a month to buy groceries and other necessities and left in secret. If he detected pursuit, he would make camp and then sneak off later in the night.

In the winter Fairplay was buried in snow. Only a few hardy souls stuck it out from late November until April. During these months Buzzard would go to Denver City or some other camp at a lower elevation to wait for the April thaw. He never seemed to worry about someone finding his mine during the

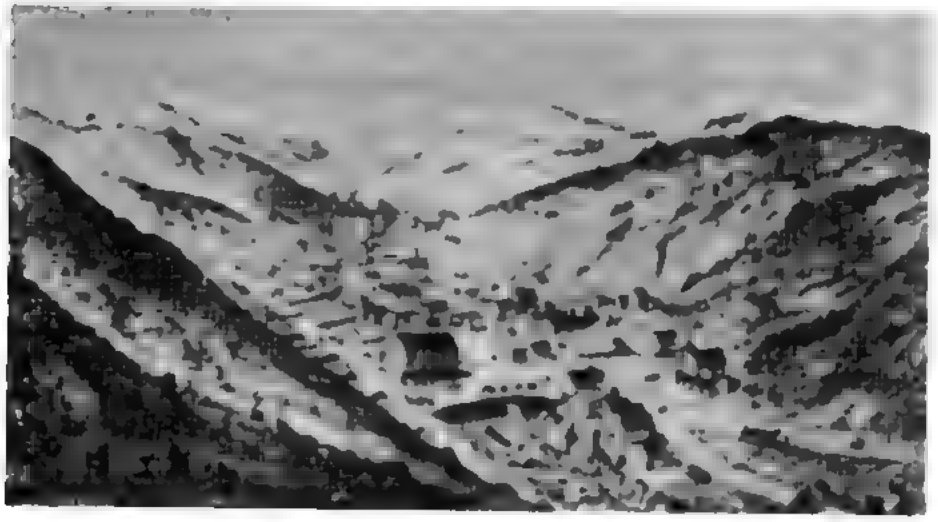
winter months, which made people presume that it was at an elevation as high or higher than that of Fairplay, 9,904 feet above sea level.

Buzzard always brought a sack of nuggets with him, exchanging them for currency and coins. His nuggets were usually better than ninety-eight per cent pure gold, but the banks were conservative and accepted them at only $9.00 to the ounce—highway robbery, yet Buzzard did not complain. There was always more—much more—where that came from.

Buzzard once told a saloonkeeper in Fairplay that he had made his discovery after shooting a groundhog. Colorado "groundhogs" become very fat during the summer months and live in hibernation in deep burrows during winter. The older ones sometimes weigh as much as twenty pounds. According to the story, when Buzzard picked the dead animal up, he noticed small-sized nuggets in the mound of earth piled in front of the burrow. Digging down, he struck a vein or layer of gold that became richer and richer as he followed it. He did not say where this vein was located and the saloon-keeper, knowing the answer he would get, did not bother to ask.

As soon as the spring buds were out, Buzzard would make his way back to the place of his discovery, pausing here and there until a good rain hit. Then off he would go in the middle of the night while the rain obliterated the trail behind him. The general direction of his movements was north, but how far north was a matter for general speculation. Buzzard always carried a rifle in a saddle scabbard and a six-shooter slung from his belt to discourage those who might be tempted to follow him.

In May, 1869, John Gregory had made a great strike at Central City. Almost overnight Fairplay's population decreased as men hurried to the new field.



Through the courtesy of the Denver Public Library Western Collection, these prints from PENCIL SKETCHES OF COLORADO by A. E. Mathews (1866) of Central City (above) and Blake Street in Denver (below) were made available to TRUE WEST.

ABOUT THIS TIME a strange thing happened. A woman named Lulubell Lockhart, a prostitute in Denver City, told a printer employed by the *Rocky Mountain News* of a dream she'd had. She said it was more like a vision than a dream, for she had clearly seen a man she knew only as Buzzard kill a girl in Fairplay with a knife after beating and raping her. The girl's screams had been stifled by a large red handkerchief Buzzard had used as a gag. Moreover, she said, Buzzard was a very wealthy man, having found a tremendously rich gold deposit that he was concealing from the world. He was an evil man, according to her dream, and should be punished.

Suspecting that the woman and Buzzard had a falling out and that she was trying to cause him trouble, the printer repeated the story to William N. Byers, publisher of the *Rocky Mountain News*.

Byers had heard of the murder at Fairplay and sent John L. Merrick, a reporter, to investigate. The *News* had just started that spring and was being careful about involving innocent persons in scandal. Merrick was told to be thorough, and he was. He did not find Buzzard but talked with all the townspeople who knew anything about the murder. He finally wrote out a report on it and submitted it to Byers, who declined to run the story on the grounds that it was libelous unless backed up by eye-witnesses.

Having caught the gold fever while away, Merrick took off for the mining camps and with him went the report, which many years later was to serve as the main source for the facts contained herein.

People in Fairplay eventually heard of Lulubell Lockhart's "vision" and interpreted it to mean that Buzzard had confessed the murder and the woman, having for some reason turned on him, was striking back by accusing him of the slaying.

One September day a horse, bearing an empty saddle, and a pack mule wandered into Boulder. Blood on the saddle indicated something quite tragic had happened to the horse's rider. It had. Two or three days later some men came upon the body of the man known as Buzzard beside a trail, with a bullet hole just over his heart. Buzzard's pockets were turned inside out; not a thing of value remained on the body.

When winter set in that year, Adolph Hockmeyer left Fairplay and was never seen there again. Some said he returned to Germany—on the gold Buzzard had on his person when slain.

The unpublished report that Merrick wrote out for the *Rocky Mountain News* somehow fell into the hands of Newt Ross, who was in Fairplay from early 1858 until 1860. Ross later moved to San Francisco and in 1930 his grandson, James Addison Ross, a newspaper reporter on the San Francisco *Bulletin*, teamed with me in rewriting the original story. From it has come this version, containing every known fact concerning the case.

If Buzzard's gold discovery was ever found, it was never identified as such. Many big and small strikes were made over the years in Colorado; it's possible someone did find it. And it's just as possible that it has never been located.

So in case any of you decide to look for the treasure, go north from Fairplay and keep a sharp eye out for groundhogs—one of them may be a millionaire!

A 92-year-old veteran of the Old West tells of

Buffalo Bill

AS I KNEW HIM

BY M. I. McCREIGHT

EDITOR'S NOTE: The author of this article was a buyer and shipper of buffalo bones on the Plains in the 1880's. A lifelong friend and defender of the Indian, he is now living at The Wigwam, in Dubois, Pennsylvania. On his property is an old-time Council House of the Mohawk tribe of the Six Nations, the Iroquois Confederacy that ruled the Eastern forests for hundreds of years before the coming of the white man. The esteem in which Mr. McCreight is held by the Mohawks is best illustrated by the following tribute written last New Year's Day by Aren Akweks, present head chief of that tribe:

Mr. M. McCreight,
Sago Skenno-Kowa
Tonikonrate, Brother:

Hogansburg, N. Y. Reservation.

Your Christmas greeting arrived here, and I have put it in our record book of the Akwesasne Mohawk Counselors so that our members can read your words and think on your thoughts. Brother, your message tells us that soon you will take the Sunset Trail where our ancient Fathers will welcome and greet you as one of themselves. It will make our hearts unhappy when you leave us . . . You will be remembered by the truths that you have written in your many books and articles about the Indians, our Fathers. Your words will be read by many and they will change the thoughts of many white folks who will read them. So, though your body may pass on, your thoughts will continue to live and speak for us . . . Always know that our hearts are with you . . . You are an INDIAN born again in a white body; sent here by our Creator to tell the world today the true story of our people. When you leave Mother Earth, you will return to your real self and our Ancient Ones will welcome you with outstretched arms. The prairies and forests will look golden and green to you and your moccasins will walk on smooth grasses. The sky will be blue, and here and there from skin and bark lodges you will see smoke rising into the sky. Your ears will hear the good music of singing voices, which will blend with the tom-tom music that belongs to this great Island. The faces you will see will be dark faces, and they will be smiling at you as you walk to greet them.

Remember this, Brother; this is how it will be for you.

Your Brother,
Aren Akweks

I first met Colonel Cody in 1887-88. He was then traveling with his new Wild West. Twice, or perhaps three times, he brought his show to Dubois, where it always drew large crowds.

His last visit to the town was in 1908, when an overflow crowd attended what was perhaps the Colonel's outstanding performance. On this visit, he had 150 Indians and more than 150 horses and ponies. All the performers were in rare form, and the show simply sparkled.

It was on this occasion that Mrs. McCreight and myself had Colonel Cody and Chief Iron Tail for dinner at our town house. We had also present to meet him, Monroe McCanles. Monroe, at the age of twelve, had stood beside his father, Dave McCanles, when Wild Bill Hickok shot him dead from behind a curtain. Then and there, for the first time, Colonel Cody heard the facts of that historic murder.

I owned then the first Rambler automobile seen in those parts, and drove the Colonel and Chief Iron Tail out to see The Wigwam. Both were greatly impressed with the situation and the sweeping view from the hilltop. Resting and smoking, we three sat fronting the big fireplace to talk over Old West times. The flames crackled, the wind sang in the chimney, and

(Continued on page 24)

NELSON LEE bought the watch in a shop in New Orleans where he was buying supplies for the trail drive to San Francisco. It was a big silver timepiece, with an alarm that rang loud and long. Lee figured the big "turnip" might come in handy on the drive, but little did he realize that this watch would save him from a horrible death at the hands of the savage Comanche Indians.

The year was 1855, just six years after the big California gold strike, and the rush to the gold fields continued. So when William Aikens suggested driving a herd of mules from Texas to San Francisco and told Lee of the fabulous profit the herd would bring there, Lee said, "Let's go!"

Lee, Aikens and twenty-five others started out from Matamoros, Mexico, with a small herd of horses and mules and headed northwest. They moved onward at a leisurely pace, buying additional stock as they traveled. They loafed along, rising each morning as Lee's alarm watch sounded off at 3:30, then pushed the herd forward until noon. They camped at noon and let the herd graze until they moved onward the next morning. The men divided the chore of patrolling the herd at night, for they were in Indian country and the wild-riding Comanches valued horses and mules highly.

On March 31, 1855, they camped 350 miles northwest of Eagle Pass, Texas, in a little valley that was abundant with wild game. A trout-filled stream flowed rapidly by the campsite. They had selected their camp with care, for they would remain here while the fat mares gave birth to colts during the spring foaling season.

Lee patrolled the herd until midnight on April 2, and when his relief came, he rode back into camp and spread out his bed. He wound his big watch, set the alarm for 3:30, laid it under his coat that he was using for a pillow, and wrapped up in his buffalo robe and Mexican blanket bed. He was soon asleep.

A terrifying scream startled Lee from his sleep, and as he leaped from his bed, he saw a band of Indians racing wildly through the camp, swinging tomahawks that gleamed with blood in the light of the flickering campfire. A noose tightened around Lee's neck and jerked him to the ground. Four Comanches pounced on him and bound his hands and feet with buffalo thongs.

The fight didn't last long. Lee and three others were all that survived. Aikens, Thomas Martin and John Stewart were lassoed and bound like Lee. Twenty-three of their companions lay dead.

A Comanche warrior picked up Lee's bedding and the big watch fell to the ground. The Indian picked it up and showed it to the other warriors. They jabbered excitedly and pointed to Lee. Then the minute hand of the watch reached 3:30; the alarm sounded and blasted the still night air. The Comanche with the watch stood paralyzed, holding the watch at arm's length, with his face twisted in a ludicrous expression of utter astonishment. The alarm rang for two minutes, and when it ran down, the Comanches gazed awe-struck at the watch. Then they gestured reverently at the sky and motioned for Lee to make it ring again.

Lee knew the Indians considered the sun as God, so he rapidly decided that if he could make them believe the watch was associated with the sun and that he was the Spirit of the Watch, he might stand a better chance for survival. The Indians untied Lee's hands, and he set the alarm and made solemn gestures toward the sky. The alarm rang and the Indians listened in awe. He repeated his performance many times until dawn came.

The Comanches started plundering the camp and scalping the dead when the sun rose. Lee looked at the camp and what he saw sickened him. Bloody, mutilated bodies lay everywhere. Some had hands and arms hacked off; some were disemboweled; some had their tongues drawn out and sharp sticks thrust through them.. Lee looked at the gory scene and wondered, "Will this happen to me?" But Lee contemplated his fate without fear for he had faced death many times in his years as a Texas Ranger on the trail of Indians and Mexican bandits.

Lee left his native New York in 1831, when he was twenty-four years old, and volunteered for the Black Hawk War. Afterwards, he enlisted in the United States Navy and spent seven years aboard a warship in South American waters. Tales of Texas caught his fancy so in 1839, he came to Texas and enlisted in the Texas Navy. After one year he quit the sea for good and enlisted in the Texas Rangers. He took part in the ill-fated Mier Expedition, in the Santa Fe Expedition, and fought in the Battle of Monterrey in the Mexican War. Lee then returned to Seguin, Texas, and began trapping, breaking, and peddling wild horses. He continued his horse peddling business until the San Francisco drive.

WHEN THE Comanches finished plundering the camp, they dressed their captives in the Comanche uniform of buckskin shirt, leggings, and moccasins. They placed their captives on mules and tied their feet together under the animals' stomachs. They blindfolded the captives, bound their hands, and set out for the Comanche village.

The mules were allowed to roam free, following a bell mare. Time after time, the mules would wander under trees and the low-hanging limbs would batter the blindfolded captives unmercifully. Each time this happened, the Comanches would laugh in fiendish glee.

When night came, the Comanches made camp and fried their supper of horse meat over a campfire. After they had gorged to capacity, the Indians threw flaming-hot hunks of meat on their captives' uncovered thighs, burning them horribly, while the Indians whooped and danced.

The ordeal of battering and burning continued for four days. Then they reached the Comanche village. Lee was led away from his fellow captives and taken to the chief's tent, where the warriors told the chief about Lee's wonderful watch. Lee solemnly performed the Ceremony of the Watch for Chief Big Wolf, greatly impressing him. Lee spent most of the night ringing the watch alarm for Big Wolf and slept that night in the chief's tent.

The next day, Lee was led to the edge of the village where Stewart, Martin, and Aikens were lashed to poles. Lee was bound to the pole next to Aikens, directly opposite from Martin and Stewart. The Indians formed a circle around Martin and Stewart; two braves leaped forward and scalped them and then the Comanches danced around the two men. Each time a Comanche would pass by the captives, he would slash them with an arrow point. For two hours the savage ritual continued. Stewart's and Martin's bodies were covered with bloody, painful gashes. Stewart tearfully prayed to God to deliver him from his pain. Martin groaned in agony. After two hours, the savages rushed the suffering captives and buried a dozen tomahawks in their heads.

Lee and Aikens were spared from torture. After the gruesome spectacle ended, they were led back to the village.

The torture of Stewart and Martin sickened Lee and for several days he refused to carry out the watch ritual. He refused to obey orders and fought his captors at every opportunity. Then one day Aikens was led into the chief's tent, where Lee was kept permanently. When Lee told him of his actions, Aikens, who was well-acquainted with Comanche customs, advised Lee to obey his captors' wishes and, above all, perform the Ceremony of the Watch upon demand. He believed Lee would probably be spared as long as the alarm continued to function. Lee agreed and promised to be more cordial with his captors. The Comanches returned and led Aikens away. Lee never saw him again. He never discovered what fate befell his partner in the ill-fated San Francisco Drive.

Lee performed the Ceremony of the Watch on demand and soon became Big Wolf's personal servant. Lee was treat-

The Comanche with the watch stood paralyzed, holding the watch at arm's length, with his face twisted in ludicrous expression of utter astonishment.

Illustrated by Randy Steffen

COMANCHE CAPTIVE

BY THOMAS W. BEARD, JR.

ed reasonably well and given more liberties, but he had no opportunities for escape.

THEN another Comanche chief, the surly Spotted Leopard, visited the camp and witnessed the ritual of the watch. He was impressed. Big Wolf and Spotted Leopard got together and when their conference ended, Spotted Leopard had purchased Lee—and his watch—for the fabulous sum of 120 horses and three horse-loads of skins.

Life in Spotted Leopard's village was anything but pleasant for Lee. Spotted Leopard and his braves beat him constantly. But the chief's youngest wife, Klanceta (The Weasel), befriended Lee, protected him from abuse, fed him when he was hungry, and nursed him when he was sick.

Lee had now been a Comanche captive for more than a year and it was evident that as long as the watch alarm would ring, he would live. But Lee decided to attempt to escape. He gathered together a bag of food and hid it in a log near the edge of the village. That night he crept out of the tent, picked up the food, and headed for a wooded ravine outside the village. He was almost out of the village when a big cur dog stood growling in his path. Lee froze with fear. In an instant, every dog in the village was barking and howling. Lee was soon encircled by the snapping, snarling creatures. Comanches sleepily shouted from their tents to quiet the dogs. Lee turned and walked back to his tent. He had failed.

Then Lee tried again. He was allowed to walk about the village freely but wasn't permitted to leave it. Each day he would walk closer to the edge of the settlement and at first the Indians would force him to go back. Then they quit noticing his walks. One afternoon at dusk, Lee sauntered out of the village toward the safety of the ravine. Three braves stepped out of the bushes and stopped him. Lee pretended to select a forked limb from one of the bushes so the Indians would think he was only cutting a stick to cook the chief's horse meat on. It didn't work.

They escorted him back to Spotted Leopard's tent, where they told the chief their story. That night Lee was bound hand and foot. The next morning Spotted Leopard came in, untied Lee's feet, took his knife, and slashed a tendon below Lee's right knee. He was going to cripple Lee so that he would never escape! For ten days, Spotted Leopard worked on Lee's leg, breaking the wound open each day. Lee was permanently lamed when the crude operation was completed, but he could still walk.

A FEW MONTHS later, another Comanche chief visited Spotted Leopard's camp. Rolling Thunder was a very pious Indian—he'd rather pray to the Sun God than hunt buffalo—and was greatly impressed by the watch. Rolling Thunder and Spotted Leopard conferred and Lee and his watch changed hands again.

(Continued on page 30)

ELECTRONIC MAGIC
ELECTRONICALLY REMASTERED

The last tragic victim of the Donner Trail was the

Mystery Man of Mullet Island

BY NELL MURBARGER

Photos from the Author

IN a more charitable age to come, this hero-exalting world may recognize the fact that not all laurels belong to the victors—that a few merit badges should be given for honest effort, regardless of end achieved.

When that time comes, it will be a great day for God's gallants—the men who fight and live and die for a cause . . . and even in death fail to gain their goals.

One of these unsung crusaders was Charles E. Davis, the Mystery Man of Mullet Island.

Davis was not an important hero. He didn't lead any armies to glory; he didn't perform any rousing deeds at sea, or even pull any fast tricks to gain him a Page One picture in the tabs.

All he did was hitch his wagon to a strange obsession, and sacrifice everything he owned—life included—that one shadowy episode in frontier history might be better understood.

Oddly enough, there doesn't appear to have been one tangible reason why this man should have turned his attention to the tragic Donner-Reed emigrant party, which, 80 years earlier, had toiled Westward from Independence, Missouri, across the grim barrier of the Rockies and the parched salt deserts of Utah and Nevada, to a rendezvous with starvation, cannibalism, and death in the roaring blizzards of the Sierra Summits.

Sponsored by no historical society, foundation or museum, he received not one penny of reimbursement for his grueling years of field research. None of his people, so far as known, had taken part in that historic fiasco, nor does anyone seem to recall that Davis had expressed previously any interest in the Donner trek.

Yet, this was the single episode in history he chose for his research . . . all of which only goes to prove that no one can fathom the workings of another man's mind—particularly a man like Davis, who lived in a strange world of his own, and so conducted himself that even close acquaintances never had the feeling of knowing him intimately.

MY own recollections of Davis stem from the middle 1920's, when I was a teen-ager and he was nudging the half-century mark. I remember him as a sharp-eyed saturnine chap, hawk-faced, dark complexioned, thin as a sapling, and nearly seven feet tall—a man who wore his clothes well and carried himself with military erectness.

Classifying him in the manner of an amateur psychologist, I would say he had been a man unmercifully torn between conflicting personalities.

According to the Brass Rail Biographers of Niland and Brawley, Charles Davis had been born in Massachusetts, of wealthy parentage, and had been reared in a fine home where colored servants did the work, and little boys wore short velvet trousers, and were schooled in the social graces.

On the Davis family tree, however, had grown other fruit than the plums of Back Bay aristocracy.

Deep in the roots of that tree had lain a strong, dark strain of Indian blood.

This, I suspect, was the joker in Charlie Davis's deck of cards.

Throughout his boyhood, this mixture of blue blood and savage had waged a continual battle for his soul; and when the time had come for choosing a life profession acceptable to his family, the black sheep of the Back Bay had kicked over the apple cart.

With all the family portraits rocking in horror, Charles Davis had turned his back on wealth and home and social position, and at the age of 16 years, had signed on as an ordinary seaman in Sol Jacobs' Atlantic fishing fleet. Here, at last, was a life to his liking and he had made the most of it—applying himself to his duties so assiduously that by his eighteenth birthday he had earned his master's papers and the rating of captain.

Captain Charles E. Davis, Mystery Man of Mullet Island.

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Quitting the sea in the closing years of the 19th century, Davis had wandered West, and in 1898 had joined the gold stampede to the Klondike. Two years later he had reappeared in Texas, and another five years found him building a home on the flank of a dead volcano, in what is now Imperial County, California.

It is almost impossible to imagine a homesite more forbidding than this place chosen by the former New Englander. Spreading away to the south and east lay a blubbering hell of hissing geysers and boiling mudpots. For forty miles to the north stretched the barren, alkaline waste of Salton Sink—the parched skeleton of an ancient sea that had passed into oblivion hundreds of years before—and overhead hung a merciless sun that sent summer temperatures soaring to 130 degrees in the shade.

Barely had Davis anchored his roots in the new location before the Colorado River let loose its banks and began pouring all its muddy fury into that salt-encrusted sink, thereby turning the old lake bed into the present Salton Sea. In the course of that transformation, Davis's volcanic butte was cut off from other land, and time would find that nubbin of earth known as Mullet Island.

ON this small, bare, sun-parched knoll, that nobody else wanted, Davis built a home which he aptly named "Hell's Kitchen"—and went on to establish there a boat landing, cafe, and dancehall. For the next twenty years he prepared and served "shore" dinners, emceed his dances, and rented boats to fishermen and duck hunters. Seining the mullet fish that had come to inhabit the Salton Sea, he cured them in a homemade smokehouse and hauled them to Los Angeles, where he set up a sidewalk stand at 8th and Broadway, gave free samples to passersby, and dared the authorities to stop him from selling his product. In his spare time "The Captain," as he liked to be known, served as game warden, fought for conservation of natural resources, and made a scientific study of the mudpots and geysers flanking his home.

These details I have cited only to show that a reasonable pattern of normalcy ran through this man, who in 1927, at the age of 50 years, suddenly snapped a padlock on the prosperous business he had labored to build, took French leave of his home and community position, withdrew his life's savings, and turned his full attention to retracing and staking every mile of the Donner-Reed Trail from Independence, Missouri to Fort Sutter, California—a distance of 2,000 miles. In re-blazing this route, it was the avowed intention of Davis to locate every overnight camp made by the wagon train, and to establish positive identification of every unmarked grave left along that tragedy-stalked way!

It would have been a terrific undertaking for even a man in the prime of life . . . and Charles Davis had already passed that point.

"I never met Davis, personally, but I came to know him by reputation when I traced the Utah-Nevada portion of the Donner Trail in 1929-30," said Charles Kelly, lifelong student of Western history and the author of several volumes dealing with that subject. "I had barely started gathering material for my book, *Salt Desert Trails*, when old desert rats began telling me of the incredible exploits of this man who had preceded me over the trail two years earlier."

According to these informants who had worked with him in the field, Davis had been possessed of an uncanny ability for locating sand-buried relics—an aptitude so pronounced that at times it seemed almost as if some shadowy corner of his subconscious self must have *actual knowledge* of where those pieces had been cast aside when weakening and dying oxen made necessary the abandonment of yet another wagon.

For example, Davis had interviewed a grandson of Lewis Keseberg, (a prominent member of the Donner party) who had told Davis that while his grandfather was chopping firewood from the top of a pine tree that protruded above the mountainous Sierra snows in that winter of 1846-47, he had had the misfortune to drop his axe into a hole formed in the snow around the hole of the tree. Peering down the length of the trunk, he could see the tool lodged in the fork of a branch, but in his weakened condition had not attempted to retrieve it.

THE story had been told to Davis simply as a means of illustrating the depth of that season's snow; but upon visiting the site of the Donner winter camp, Davis walked straight through the forest to the tree holding that axehead—still fixed in the high crotch where it had lodged 80 years before! With the bark of the tree grown almost completely over the blade, there seemed little question but this was the Keseberg axe.

The first few times that Davis was responsible for discoveries of this sort, his feats were passed over as "coincidences" and "luck" . . . But when such exploits become a run-of-the-mill program, folks began looking strangely at one another and asking themselves, *"How does this man know where these incidents occurred?"*

Time and again, that strange skill was demonstrated as Davis located one after another of the campsites occupied by the Donner party, eight decades before.

Nearing a point of the desert where it seemed logical to him that a camp must have been made (as determined by mileage records, availability of water, and possible mention of landmarks) Davis would crawl over the area on his hands and knees, sniffing at the ground like a dog trying to pick up a scent. In nearly every instance, Kelly was told, the man would eventually "smell fire" and upon digging down, would uncover a pile of 80-year-old charcoal!

Possibly the most uncanny of all his exploits, was the ability he displayed in identifying the inhabitants of unmarked graves.

At Gravelly Ford, in Nevada, for example, Davis located a grave which he identified and marked as that of John Snyder, murdered Oct. 18, 1846, as result of an argument that arose as the emigrant party had been crossing the Humboldt River. Other historians were quick to find fault with this identification. Snyder *couldn't* have been murdered and buried at that particular crossing, they asserted. It was contrary to all the records. Snyder was buried farther down the river, at Iron Point, or farther up, or across on the other side. He was buried almost any place, it seemed, except where Davis said.

But subsequent investigation proved that the "historians" were wrong, and Davis was right! The grave Davis had been first to identify as John Snyder's,

"Hell's Kitchen" former home of Charles E. Davis, on Mullet Island, in the Salton Sea, Southern California. This photo was taken twenty years after his death.

was occupied by John Snyder and none other.

On another occasion, Davis found two graves and left notes in tobacco cans to mark them as the graves of Hargrove and Halloran.

"I doubted that identification for a long while," said Kelly. "But journals recently discovered prove that Davis—as usual—was correct!"

How had Charles Davis known the identities of these graves? How could he have known their identity . . . unless, as was covertly suggested at the time, he was being supernaturally guided in his quest by the spirit of someone who had taken part in that tragic epic . . .

IN the course of his field research, which spanned a two-year period, Davis picked up a soldier, Emile Cote, who agreed to accompany him for awhile. Upon reaching Skull Valley, in Western Utah, the men made camp and continued afoot into the grim desolation and dread immensity of the Great Salt Desert—a land area nearly as large as the State of New Jersey, but wherein Davis was sanguinely confident he could locate a group of five wagons which the Donners had abandoned.

And, incredibly enough, Davis and Cote actually *found* those wagons, together with the bones of oxen, still lying beneath their yokes where they had fallen more than three-quarters of a century before!

After photographing the scene of tragedy, Davis and Cole continued to follow the Donners' *still visible* wagon tracks for nearly twenty miles into the salt waste, all along that way finding more bones, and wagon wheels, and barrels fallen to staves, and abandoned household gear. When a depleted water supply at last forced the men to turn back, they had already been lured too far into the salt flats; and long before reaching their base camp the water in their canteens was exhausted and the two were staggering blindly and raving in delirium.

Experiences of this sort were too much for a man of Davis's years and strength, and completion of his self-assigned task found him broken in health and indescribably weary.

Returning to Fort Sutter, Davis placed at the disposal of the museum there the great wealth of material he had gathered along the Donner Trail—not only the valuable pioneer relics recovered, but reams of filled notebooks and huge files of maps and photographs. When he further expressed a desire to record his impressions of the Donner trek, as interpretated through the retracing of that trail, a stenographer was placed at his service, and for weeks he endeavored to dictate the story.

But the effort was useless. The story refused to take form. The once brilliant and meticulous mind of the man seemed frayed beyond all understanding; and the once strong voice repeatedly faltered and trailed away, until the final result of his dictation was only a purile and disconnected jumble.

Sick in body and soul, his strength and savings exhausted, Charles Davis returned to Mullet Island—a man grown old in the brief time lapse of only two years!

Even in view of the hardships endured and thousands of hours of strenuous labor expended in the course of his two-year efforts, it seems unlikely that physical factors, alone, could have been responsible for the deep spiritual and mental blight that had swept over this Man from Mullet. Is it not possible, then, that Davis's dissolution did not come from physical causes, but was rooted in the horror and ghastliness transmitted to him vicariously in the mile-by-mile tracing of a tragic trail?

DOGGING the footsteps of the Donners, plodding endlessly over the same desolate barrens they had crossed nearly a century before, sleeping in the same camps where their men and women and little children had died from starvation and cold and hunger and thirst and exhaustion, kneeling beside their unmarked graves in the wilderness, looking upon their abandoned wagons and the whitening bones of their oxen, reading the ghastly, hand-penned records of that terrible winter at Donner Lake, forever seeking to put himself in the place of these people in order to better understand the abysmal depths of despair and desperation that had led them, at last, to cooking and eating the flesh of their own dead—if all this had not contributed to Davis's mental upheaval, at least it had gnawed so deeply into his heart and soul that those memories were to haunt and hound him all the remaining days of his life.

Hoping to divert his mind from this fixation that had come to possess it, former friends of "The Captain" tried to interest him in reopening his little resort on Mullet Island; but if he heard them, he gave no evidence of that fact.

"It almost seemed as if his ears were attuned to a different wave length," one of his friends said later. "He seemed to be hearing 'Voices' the others of us couldn't hear . . ."

And, possibly, that explanation had not been too far wrong. Who knows enough about the hyperphysical to say that ghostly Voices were not coming across the decades to Charles Davis—the voices of martyred Tamsen and George Donner, of "Little Charlie" Stanton, abandoned to perish alone beside the trail, of murdered John Snyder, and banished James Reed, and "Uncle Billy" Graves, and grieving Mary Graves. Who knows but all these shadowy forms from Outer Space were whispering to the Man from Mullet . . . were telling him that through one medium alone might their pioneer epic be recounted in all its grisly horror.

How else explain the fact that Charles Davis, in his mad groping for articulation, should have turned to paint and canvas as his chosen means of expression?

That he had no knowledge of art forms or mediums left him as wholly undaunted as the fact that he had no funds with which to purchase paint and other necessary art materials. When determination is sitting in the saddle, even a lame horse manages to walk

While making his earlier scientific survey of the mud pots around Mullet Island, Davis had noticed the presence of clay in a wide range of tints. Remembering this, now, he revisited the geyser field, gathered quantities of each color mud, dried it, pulverized it to powder, and sifted it through silk. These natural pigments he then redissolved in the clear oil rendered from native mullet; and with this improvised paint for a "medium" he was ready to start work.

Hunched before a makeshift easel, in the cluttered, poorly-lighted shabbiness of Hell's Kitchen, Charles Davis picked up his makeshift pallette, dipped a makeshift brush into makeshift paint, applied the first bold stroke to a makeshift canvas . . . and began pouring out his soul!

Furiously, zealously, fanatically, that outpouring of emotion was to continue

Painting by Charles Davis depicting members of the starving Donner-Reed party as they leave their winter camp at Donner Lake in a desperate attempt to escape across the mountainous snows of the Sierra in January, 1847. The two foreground figures are life size.

Left: Painting of Donner-Reed Trail, by Charles E. Davis. The caption reads: "One Day Late." Right: Primitive painting depicting an episode in the tragic Donner-Reed Trail. Caption of painting: "Her Last Sunset."

for three full years . . . and during those years, in that cluttered fisherman's shack on Mullet Island, were to be born some of the most hauntingly bizarre primitives ever produced by the brush of an American painter!

CHARLES DAVIS wasn't an artist . . . and neither were his paintings ART as taught in schools. Critics would have had a Roman holiday finding fault with their perspective and lines, and shading, and half a hundred other flaws; while the color-limitation imposed by those brown-predominant pigments, gave to all the paintings a grim, somber sameness. But in that grimness, that somberness, lay power and vigor.

Here was a mad epic of salt blizzard and searing sun, of man's pain and perfidy and treachery and tears, of burned wagons and oxen dying in their yokes, of fevered babies crying for water . . . and Death riding through the night on a dark horse.

This was not Art, but Drama—Drama stripped to the bare bone! It was defeat, despair, discouragement, hopelessness, heartlessness. It was more than Art . . . it was the laying bare of a man's soul.

As each canvas was stripped from the easel, another was flung in place before the paint had dried on the first. As long as time and funds permitted, Davis framed the pictures—choosing for that purpose a heavy, unadorned black wood, as gaunt and sepulchral as the scenes themselves. Later, there was neither time nor money for framing . . . but still, the pictures poured forth!

After the walls of Hell's Kitchen were covered with the huge, life-sized canvasses, Davis began piling them anywhere he could find space—on his table, his bed, on the chairs; and finally, he was stacking them on the floor, one upon another.

No one knows how many pictures of the Donner Trail were painted by Davis in the course of that frenzied, three-year effort. Probably there were a hundred of them, at least; possibly even more. Brought forth under terrific strain, emotional as well as physical, each succeeding canvas had drawn more deeply on the man's failing strength, until, at last, he knew that his fountain of endurance was about run dry. With this realization, Davis yielded to a belated desire to return to the home and family he had left many years before.

But Charles Davis's time on earth was short.

In May, 1933, only a few days after his arrival in New England, the mysterious Man from Mullet Island died quietly at his ancestral home. He was fifty-six years of age.

TIME PASSED—twenty years of it—and with the spring of 1953, I was at Niland, California, doing research for an article on the Salton Sea. While talking with one of the local old-timers, the name of Charles Davis was mentioned, and, instantly, I was remembering that gaunt, cadaverous man with the dark, burning eyes—the Man of Mystery, who had devoted the closing years of his life to tragically recording the tale of a tragic endeavor. With that memory, there swept over me an urge to revisit Mullet Island and see what changes those two decades had brought.

Although far more ramshackle than when I had seen it last, the old boat dock was still strewn with cast-off fishing gear and tattered gill nets, and dead fish. Following the dusty foottrail back from the dock, my memory guided me unerringly through the old cafe and dance-hall—now dark and silent—and on out the rear door of the cafe to the cabin, Hell's Kitchen—still the same smelly, half-forbidding, wholly fascinating place, I had remembered from kid days.

Beaten upon by salt-laden desert winds, and faded and cracked by soaring summer heat, it huddled against the island slope like an old woman shorn of both heart and hope. In the hot dusty little yard, and around the front porch, lay the same cluttery collection—broken oars, a wrecked dory, old rubber boots, a coil of rotting rope, rusted oar locks, bleached fish bones, an old felt hat trodden into a shapeless mass, and an old wooden bucket, fallen to staves.

Picking my way over the loose boards of the front porch, I stepped through the sagging door into a half-dark room that reeked with an unwholesome moldy smell, like the inside of a grave. There were a few broken chairs and pine benches, a plank table, and an old cook stove with a rusty pipe. Yards of torn fish nets and cork floats hung in dirty gray loops from the bare rafters, and over everything lay a deep mantle of wind-driven sand and packrat litter.

Otherwise there was nothing in the room but a deathlike stillness . . . and the paintings!

Accusingly, questioningly, condemningly, the horror-ridden faces in those primitive portraits stared at me from dark corners, from behind the door, from beneath cobwebbed loops of the fish net. Some still hung on the rough board walls, others leaned against the table, still more were strewn upon the splintered floor, their canvasses torn and cracked and trodden upon by careless feet.

Picking my way around and between the pictures, while the white salt dust on the floor crunched under my shoes, and rose to sting my nostrils and drift restlessly through the dead air, I found myself turning over in my mind the old recurrent questions:

Why had Davis suddenly elected to research the Donner Trail? How had he been guided to lost graves and scenes of tragedy unknown to any living man? And, finally, why had this man of mystery chosen to tell the story of that tragic epic through this mad outpouring of primitive oils?

Only Davis had known the answer to those questions—if even *he* had known! —and now that he was twenty years in his grave, those questions would never be answered.

It didn't matter that he had been an eccentric character and a man of mystery—or even that a trace of the occult

may have entered into his exploits—he still was a good historian and a master researchist. He had left nothing to chance or guesswork—and, regardless of how many "historians" have done it since, he had been the first man in history to retrace the Donner Trail.

Closing the door behind me, I made my way back through the darkened cafe and dancehall, and down the rocky trail to the boat dock. My one desire now was to put distance between myself and that hopeless sepulchre, Hell's Kitchen.

I never expect to go back there again . . . and I hope that the ghost of Charles Davis never goes back there, either. I wouldn't want his ghost to know that this great legacy of paintings—his dying tribute to a tragic epic of pioneer days—had been permitted to fall to ruin beneath the layering dust of indifference.

Interior of Hell's Kitchen, former home of Charles Davis, as it appeared twenty years after death of owner. At that time the bizarre paintings of the Donner-Reed tragedy still filled the room.

Buffalo Bill as I Knew Him

(Continued from page 17)

Colonel Cody talked of many things that had happened in his long, adventurous life.

Among other things, he mentioned the Slim Buttes fight, the death of Tall Bull, and his own supposed duel with Yellow Hand. He stated definitely that he did *not* kill Tall Bull, (Ed Note: Tall Bull was killed by Major Frank North, at Summit Springs, in July of 1869), and that he did *not* kill Yellow Hand. He said earnestly that he had never knowingly killed *any* Indian.

I asked his opinion of my two friends, Captain Jack and Bob Strahorn, and he replied that they were both good scouts and did good service as such. I then asked him about the murder of American Horse by the soldiers at Slim Buttes. The Colonel would not discuss it; he just shook his head and said it was too bad to talk about.

Colonel Cody autographed a late photo of himself and asked that it be placed beside a picture of his Indian friends. There it hangs today.

In the afternoon of that memorable day at The Wigwam, Colonel Cody assembled the chiefs and sub-chiefs with his show to hold a ceremony for making a real Sioux Chief of the writer. Iron Tail made the impressive ceremonial speeches. I reciprocated by presenting the chief with a new repeating rifle as a tribute and token of my ever-lasting friendship. Mrs. McCreight was also dedicated as a good squaw, and feathers placed on her head. Cody and the editor of the local newspaper, the *Journal*, were the only white witnesses.

COLONEL CODY stood about six feet tall. His was a kindly countenance, and he always had a kindly word for everyone. His hair was beginning to turn gray, and hung half-way to his waist. He wore a heavy moustache, carefully trimmed, and a bushy goatee. In his white wide-brim sombrero, mounted erectly on his big white horse with flowing mane and tail, he made a thrilling picture that was famous all over the world. He had taken his Wild West to Europe and exhibited in London, Paris, Amsterdam, Rome, and Venice. In London, Queen Victoria asked for a special performance for herself and guests. The Sioux Chief, Red Shirt, put on a spirited war dance. The Queen applauded, and presented Red Shirt with a royal tribute. (A copy of Red Shirt's portrait, in his full regalia, hangs in The Wigwam today).

Harking back to his dinner conversation with Monroe McCanles, Cody remarked that he would include the story of Dave McCanles' killing in his projected autobiography. Unfortunately, this book was never published. Years later, the Nebraska Historical Society published a volume containing all details of that unsavory episode—verifying the facts related by Monroe McCanles to Colonel Cody. So, finally, the false tales of the outlaw Hickok's bravery were exploded by truth.

There, on that fondly remembered occasion nearly a half-century ago, Colonel Cody reiterated what he had told me before: that "Chief Iron Tail is the finest man I know, bar none!" He recalled with pleasure one time when he and Iron Tail went elk-hunting in the Rockies for a week, depending on the game they killed to supply them with food.

Seven years later, in 1915, the writer gave a reception for Iron Tail and Flying Hawk at The Wigwam, where over a hundred guests gathered to meet them. The two chiefs were close friends and sometimes traveled with the same show—in this case, the 101 Ranch Show of Miller Brothers. When either or both came within a hundred miles of Dubois, they took a few days off and came to visit at The Wigwam. They considered it their home in the East, and knew they were always welcome.

In 1915, Iron Tail was with Colonel Cody's Wild West, showing in Philadelphia, when he took sick with pneumonia and was placed in St. Luke's Hospital. I sent a wire to Cody to send or bring the chief to The Wigwam for recovery as soon as he was able to travel. The message was not delivered, as Cody had already left for Baltimore. The sick chief asked to be sent home. He was placed on a sleeper and was found dead in his berth at Fort Wayne next morning. His sudden death was a great shock to Colonel Cody. He never knew until months later of my wire.

I next saw the Colonel in the main dining room of the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel in Philadelphia at the close of his 1915 season. Cody was having breakfast with his wife I saluted them and sat down for a chat.

The famous scout had aged greatly since our last meeting. His hair was a mass of straggling, wispy white and his face was deeply wrinkled. One not knowing him of old, would hardly have believed that this was the real Buffalo Bill

We talked about Iron Tail's death, and Cody almost wept in his grief. He keenly regretted not receiving my wire, believing as I did that the ailing chief might have recovered among friends at The Wigwam. Tactfully I changed the subject, inquiring as to the Colonel's future plans. He said that he would go out again for the 1916 season, and hoped to see us at The Wigwam on that roundup.

But the old Colonel was about at the end of the long trail. He went out as promised at the start of the 1916 campaign, and I saw him at the end of the last performance. Going to his tent at the rear of the showgrounds, I found him lying on his blankets, with his snowy head resting on his saddle. He was asleep, but roused at once at my greeting. He arose, shook hands, and immediately spoke of Iron Tail. With deep emotion, he said he was going to put a granite stone on the chief's grave, with a replica of the buffalo nickel (for which Iron Tail had posed) carved on it as a memento. Cody's voice trembled as he again expressed his great regret at not receiving my telegram that might have saved Iron Tail's life

I was shocked and saddened to observe how feeble he was. I helped him to his feet, guided him to his private car and saw him to his berth. I shook hands with him for the last time. Not long after, Buffalo Bill went to his last long sleep.

The Indian's Bride

One day I wandered far from town
And on the desert sat me down
The sun beat hard upon my hide
And as I sat and slowly fried,
Across the blistering sands, I saw
An Indian with brand-new squaw;
As they drew near, I heard sighs—
The lovely bride raised tired eyes
That shone most wistfully upon
The horse her Brave sat proudly on.
"Why don't you let her ride?" I cried.
Surprised, the gallant Brave replied,
"She has no horse! How can she ride?"

—Lorna Baker

Don't let him in—he looks crooked!

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Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano

When Wes Hardin fought the Mexican trail-drivers that day on Newton Prairie, the result was

Some Shooting!

BY HAROLD GLUCK

A RELIABLE gun was a necessity for the Westerner, whether he was on the right side of the law, the wrong side, or—as often happened with many men—smack dab in the middle. John Wesley Hardin, for example, had a harrowing experience with an old cap-and-ball six-shooter—an experience that almost cost him his life.

Hardin was driving a herd of cattle on the Newton Prairie in Kansas. His herd was right in front of another herd driven by Mexicans. Friction developed when the Mexican herd kept crowding Hardin's cattle so closely that it took two or three hands to keep the cattle from getting mixed up. The Mexican trail boss rode forward and told Hardin to move his herd faster. Wes replied, "Take your herd to the outside of the trail. Plenty of room for everybody thataway."

The Mex trail boss cursed in Spanish, and pulled his riders off the "point" of his herd. What happened next can best be told in Hardin's own words:

"No one being in front of the cattle, they rushed right into my herd, so I turned them off to the left. The boss Mexican rode back to where I was and cursed me in Mexican. He said he would kill me with a rifle just as quick as he could get it from the wagon. In about five minutes I saw him coming back with a gun. He rode up to within about a hundred yards of me, got down off his horse, took deliberate aim at me and fired. The ball grazed my head, going through my hat and knocking it off. He tried to shoot again, but something got wrong with his gun and he changed it to his left hand and pulled his pistol with his right hand.

"He began to advance on me, shooting at the same time. He called up his crowd of six or seven Mexicans. In the meanwhile, Jim Clements, hearing I was in a row, had come to my assistance. I was riding a fiery gray horse and the pistol I had was an old cap-and-ball, which I had worn out shooting on the trail. There was so much play between the cylinder and the barrel that it would not burst a cap or fire unless I held the cylinder with one hand and pulled the trigger with the other. I made several unsuccessful attempts to shoot the advancing Mexican from his horse, but failed. I then got down and tried to shoot and hold my horse, but failed in that too.

"Jim Clements shouted to me to 'turn that horse loose and hold the cylinder!' I did so and fired at the Mexican, who was now only ten paces from me. I hit him in the thigh and stunned him a little. I tried to fire again but snapped (misfired). The Mexican had evidently fired his last load, so we both rushed together in a hand-to-hand fight. The other Mexicans had by this time come close up and were trying to shoot me every chance they got. Jim Clements, seeing I had no chance to win, rushed between me and the other Mexicans and told them not to shoot, but to separate us, as we were both drunk and did not know what we were doing.

"ANOTHER MEXICAN, who had not been there at the beginning of the fight, then rode up and fired two shots at me, but missed. We covered him with our pistols and he stopped. It was then

agreed to stop the fight for a time, so the Mexicans went back to their herd. We were not fixed for that fight but wanted to be for the coming one. This was the real reason we made a truce for the time. Jim and I went straight to camp and loaded two of the best pistols there. While we were doing this a message came from the Mexicans that time was up and they were coming. We, of course, sent the messenger back and told the Mexicans to keep off our herd and not to come around; that we did not want any more trouble.

"Seven of them gathered on the west side of the herd and seemed to talk matters over. Presently, the boss, Hosea, my old foe, with three men came around to the east side where we were. I had changed horses, so I rode to meet him. He fired at me when about seventy-five yards away, but missed me. I concluded to charge him and turned my horse loose at him, firing as I rode. The first ball did the work. I shot him through the heart and he fell over the horn of his saddle, pistol in hand and one in the scabbard, the blood pouring from his mouth. In an instant I had his horse by the reins, and Jim Clements had relieved him of his pistols and Hosea fell dead to the ground.

"The other Mexicans kept shooting at us, but did not charge. They were in two parties, one about seventy-five yards to the south; the other about 150 yards to the west. We charged the first party and held our fire until we got close to them. They never weakened, but kept shooting at us all the time. When we got right on them and opened up they turned their horses, but we were right in the middle of them, dosing them with lead. They wheeled and made a brave stand. We were too quick for them, however, in every way and they could not go our gait. A few more bullets quickly and rightly silenced the party forever.

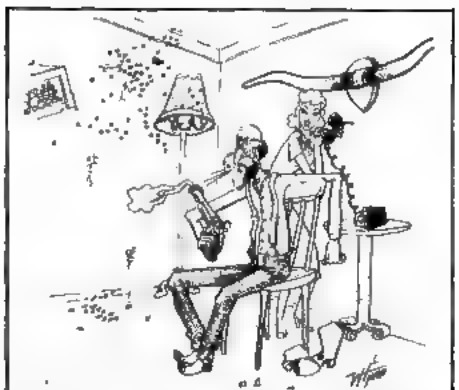
"The other party was advancing on us and shooting as they came. We, therefore, determined to stampede the herd, which we did in short order by shooting a steer in the nose. This seemed to demoralize them for a while and they broke to the battle, except one, who stood still and continued to use his pistol. We cross-fired on him, and I ended his existence by putting a ball through his temples. We then took after the rest, who now appeared to be hunting protection from other herders. We caught up with two of them, and Jim Clements covered and held them while I rounded up two more. These latter two said they had nothing to do with the fight and that their companions must have been drunk. We let these two go to the cattle.

"A crowd of cowmen from all around had now gathered. I suppose there were twenty-five of them around the two Mexicans we had first rounded up. We thus had good interpreters and once we thought the matter was settled with them . . . Suddenly the Mexicans, believing they had the drop, pulled their pistols and both fired point-blank at me. I don't know how they missed. In an instant I fired at one, then at the other. The first I shot through the heart and he dropped dead. The second I shot through the lungs and Jim shot him, too. He fell off his horse and I was going to shoot him again when he begged and held up both hands. I could not shoot a man, not even a treacherous Mexican, begging and down. Besides, I knew he would die anyway.

"In comparing notes after the fight, we agreed that I had killed five out of six dead Mexicans."

WES HARDIN'S dry, factual account of this bloody affair on Newton Prairie in 1871 sharply points up the fact that—writers of Western fiction and Hardin *aficionados* notwithstanding—the old-time gunfighters and the old-time six-shooters were far from infallible. Hardin himself did deadly execution, but he burned a lot of powder in the doing. Yet he survived largely because of the incredibly poor marksmanship of his opponents rather than because of the superior quality of his own. One wonders just how much other famed gunslingers of the Old West owed their fearsome reputations to newspaper reporters and dime novelists. It is an interesting and challenging thought to any serious student of Western Americana.

"Wish I could git rid of this durn headache I got back in the pass!"



"Gramps, the people in the next apartment are complaining about you killing flies again."

I Knew Jesse James' Mother

(Continued from page 13)

Jess and "Buck," as she called Frank—were victims of the Civil War. And that is, I think, true. They came from the hottest corner in that useless war between the North and South—Clay County, Missouri.

THERE came into her life a great, an almost overwhelming disappointment. Jesse turned bank robber. But that did not make her stop defending him. He wouldn't have been a bank robber, she said, if he hadn't been starving and the banks rolling in money. At this time the banks were unregulated and could charge a farmer any old amount of interest they wanted.

When he began to rob railroads, she had an excuse for that, too. The railroads were unregulated, she said, and could charge a farmer any amount they wanted to for shipping his livestock. And that was just about true.

Our people didn't try too hard to catch Jesse. When Jesse and his men robbed a bank, my father and the neighbors would get out their fowling-pieces, hop on the fat farm horses and "pursue" Jesse. They knew that the Jesse James Gang had the best horses obtainable and that the men were dead shots. So Pa and the neighbors loped gently along, hoping they wouldn't see the gang.

It wasn't long until there was a reward of $10,000 on Jesse's head, dead or alive—preferably the former. His mother was astounded.

Then came the day when Jesse was killed by a snake who had been living in Jesse's home for two weeks just waiting for the chance.

The mother was sent for. When she saw the body, she wept copiously, saying, "This is my son. O Jesse, they have taken you from me." She sobbed so deeply she had to be escorted from the room.

He was buried in front of her house. Before the casket was lowered, she put her head on it and sobbed, "Oh, my darling, misunderstood son."

Twenty years and two months the body was in the front yard. She used to sit in a rocking chair on the porch and look at the grave and say, "My poor boy! They never understood him."

Once, when I was in the yard, she looked at me with her fading eyes and said, "I can see you are young. I hope you are as fine a boy as mine were."

She grew more and more feeble. Meanwhile, Frank bought a farm near Fletcher, Oklahoma. The old lady went down to see him and stayed a week.

TIME came for her to leave. She was put on a sleeper and started home. In the middle of the night, she called the porter. "There's something wrong," she said.

She died on the train in February, 1911. She was eighty-seven. When the train crew found out who she was, they were astonished.

Her request was that she was to be buried beside Jesse in Mount Olivet Cemetery, at Kearney, Missouri. "I want to lie down beside him," she said. She left the words she wanted cut into his tombstone. The date of Jesse's birth and death are set down, then this:

In Loving Remembrance of My Beloved Son, Jesse James
Murdered by a Traitor and Coward
Whose Name is Not Worthy to Appear here.

And there that tombstone stands today, chipped down a lot by tourists so that only the pedestal is left. And that is the story of the "tobacco bride" who loved her wayward sons so devotedly.

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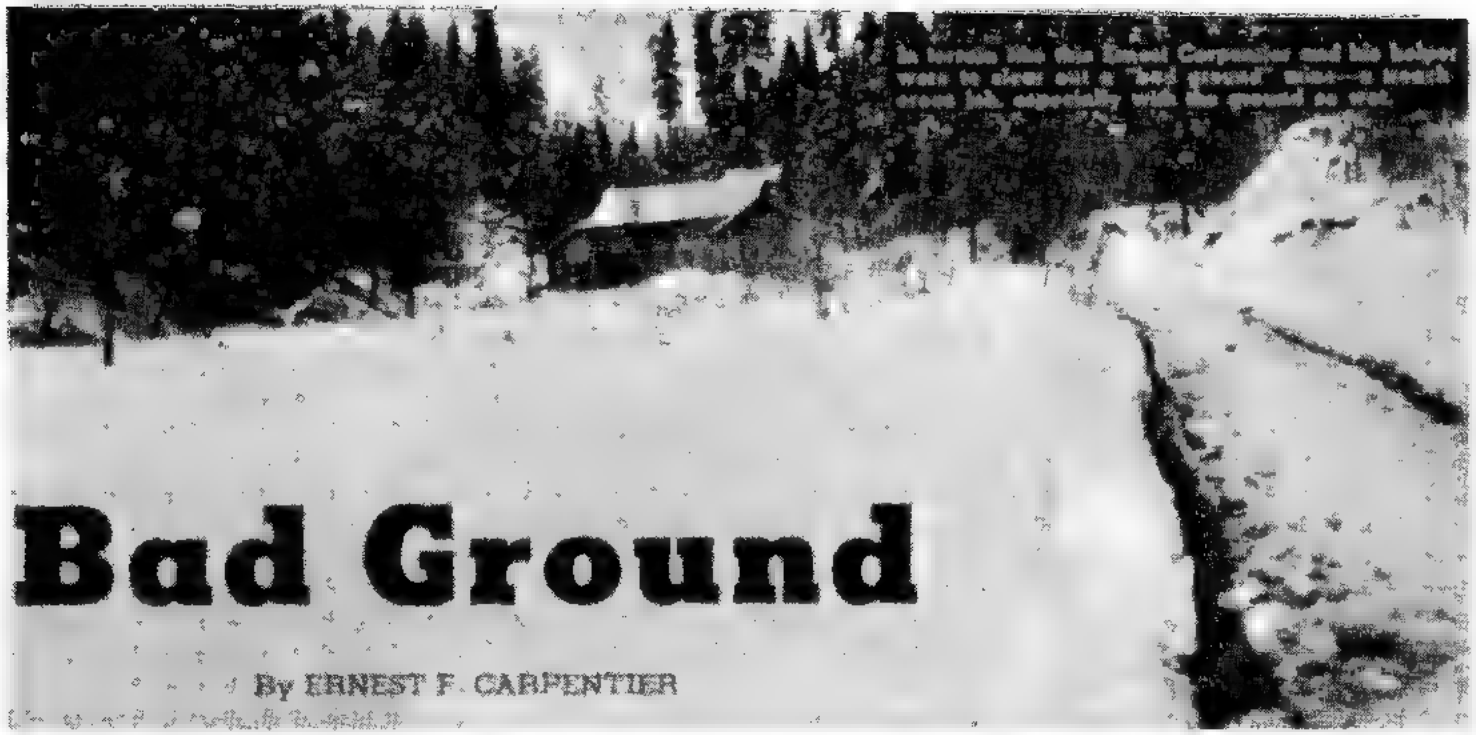

Bad Ground

By ERNEST F. CARPENTIER

It was a dangerous job in the first place. And the boss had assigned a greenhorn to help me out with it

TO see death closing around you and be helpless to do anything about it, is an unforgettable experience. I think the odds would be a thousand to one a couple of miners would survive the mess we got into.

I was headed for trouble when the mine manager called me into his office. He put it this way: "You know, of course, that by the time the mill is ready to crush ore, we must have water. The only way we can get it is to open the old Missouri Ditch tunnel. This tunnel is 1,800 feet long and caved in, no doubt, its entire length. There is only room for two men to work at the same time, so pick yourself a helper and go to it."

He assigned me to the job because I was the only experienced bad ground miner in camp. The idea of working bad ground with a green hand did not appeal to me, but we had to have water. My problem was to find a miner who could take it when the going got rough, but every man I approached declared he was not a bad ground miner. It looked like I was to draw a blank, but Frank Miller, a young, husky mucker said he would be my helper.

In miners' parlance, bad ground in a tunnel is a mass of loose dirt and rocks that closes in from all sides when a set of timbers buckle. It is a giant underground octopus of tremendous deadly pressure always waiting to crush or smother you to death. Usually, a miner who takes a chance in such ground never lives to tell about it.

The boss could not have selected a worse time to open that tunnel. It was a typical south Idaho winter in 1930 in the mountainous section of historic Boise County where the Missouri Mine was located. Six feet of thawing snow covered the region. It was the first of March and the early spring rains were making the snow and ground a little wetter every day.

The tunnel had been driven under a low ridge and its lowest depth under the surface was about thirty feet. The project would not be an easy one, for we would be constantly working under shallow wet ground that would have to be carefully handled to prevent a cave-in.

We had other problems. The tunnel was only wide enough to clear the old ore car. But the unusual construction of the timbering revealed that the tunnel had two ceilings! This was the result of an engineering blunder. When the tunnel was driven, years before, a crew started at each end and the ditch survey was calculated that the crews were to connect at the exact point of water grade halfway in the tunnel. Somehow, the engineers threw in the wrong figures and the crew from the south found themselves eighteen inches higher than the crew from the north. The engineers were confronted with the impossibility of running water up hill.

In order to get water grade correction, the bottom of the tunnel and each set of timbers had to be lowered eighteen inches for several hundred feet, but the ceiling could not be disturbed because of possible dangerous cave-ins. The procedure, therefore, was to lower the sill and posts of each set but leave the original cap in place by securing it to the ceiling with short posts eighteen inches long that were wedged in place on the tops of the original posts. So the posts would not buckle from side pressure, an eight-inch cap was notched in at the joint. Lagging or split timber was laid on top of the lower cap to make the second ceiling.

WE opened the portal and found the tunnel about as expected. Some sets required only minor repairs, but long sections of the tunnel had rotted timbers smashed in by tons of dirt and rocks. This muck was wet and loose, so we had to false set and drive lagging ahead. In other words, we had to barrel ourselves in with protective timber, for our lives depended upon that timber holding against the terrific pressure of settling muck that closed around the set.

We laid our rail right up to the mucking and rolled up the ore car only when loading. At other times we left the car down the tunnel about twenty feet for safety. As usual, we had the car close to the mucking when that underground octopus started to move. We were about 800 feet from the portal where four sets had not caved much muck and the old timbers tested sound enough to be safe. The next set ahead, however, was caved so it was necessary to drive lagging and barrel in. Frank inserted a wedge between the old lagging and cap that supported the first ceiling, and gave it a couple light cautious taps with a hammer, the purpose being to raise the old lagging barely enough so a new one could be driven under it.

The wedging was taking place at the left end of the cap, and when Frank struck the wedge the cap suddenly slipped downward about two inches on the post. I yelled a warning and Frank jumped back where I stood in the next set. Our eyes riveted on that cap, we listened for the ominous dead silence to be broken by a trickle of sand—a warning that the earth above us was starting to move. We waited.

Suddenly, before I could stop him, Frank grabbed a five-foot lagging, jumped across the set and slapped it under the end of the sagging cap. I saw his look

(Continued on page 30)

The HEADLESS Warrior

By WILLIAM R. BROCK

Illustrated by Joe Grandos

Kit Carson said it: "The Cheyennes are the durndest fighters on the plains." This grim little tale proves his point

Editor's Note:

This story was related to the writer by Paul M. Rhodes, who is the great-grandson of Mouse's Road. The incident is also related by George Bird Grinnell in his book THE FIGHTING CHEYENNES.

WASHINGTON IRVING'S spooky tale of the Headless Horseman may be pure myth, but in the annals of Indian history there lies the story of the Headless Warrior—a man so brave that even though he was beheaded in battle, he arose again to fight; a man whose bravery struck terror in an entire Indian village, drove its braves from their camp and marked his name as one never to be forgotten.

It was just before dawn one morning in 1837. A heavy fog had settled thickly over the prairie of northeastern Colorado when Stone Forehead and Pushing Ahead halted their band of Cheyennes at the crest of a rise, to reconnoiter. They, afoot, had traveled long through the night from their camp on the South Platte River and they were weary. The Kiowa-Comanche village lay below them on Big Sand Creek.

The Kiowas and Comanches were in their tepees, asleep. Quietly, Stone Forehead deployed his band of Cheyennes,

warning them with quick motions of his hands to circle about the camp in silence. They were after horses, not scalps.

They split into small groups, moving swiftly, silently through the early morning. Grey dawn would soon be breaking in the east to chase away the covering fog.

Big Gake and a young warrior crept into the camp in search of horses. Meanwhile, Mouse's Road and two others drove away a small band of horses at the edge of the encampment. Stone Forehead and Pushing Ahead had taken the rest of the raiding party to steal the brood herd. The plan was to meet north of the camp, and drive the horses away before the Kiowas and Comanches awakened.

But in the darkest hour before dawn, the party became separated and never rejoined. Mouse's Road led his group away without waiting. And before they had traveled far, they met Big Gake and his companion still afoot, having found no horses for themselves.

Mouse's Road gave them each a horse and told them to help drive the rest north. But it was then that Big Gake protested.

"Leave all except the ones we ride. Soon the Kiowa and Comanche will come," he said, pointing through the growing light toward their encampment. "They are awake now. They will miss the horses and follow our tracks."

"No," Mouse's Road said, his eyes cold and determined. "We will take them all. Our people need these horses."

"Then I'll go ahead alone," Big Gake stated, and rode away leaving his four tribesmen to drive the horses.

When he reached the top of the hill he turned and looked back. In the distance he could see the Kiowas and Comanches coming, as he knew they would. But still Mouse's Road and his three companions tried to drive the horses ahead. When Big Gake saw the enemy sweeping down on them, he turned and kicked his horse into a full run toward the South Platte.

WHEN Mouse's Road saw the Kiowas and Comanches charging down on them, he shouted for his companions to abandon the horses. They ran to the crest of the hill, then turned to fight, each dismounting.

The enemy circled them while the four Cheyennes fought bravely. But they were outnumbered twenty-five to one, and soon Mouse's Road alone remained alive.

Early in the fight he had broken his bow, and stood facing his enemy armed with nothing but his knife. They drew up in a circle about him, marveling that during the entire siege he had never even been wounded.

But seeing that he stood alone and without a bow, a Comanche chief charged, holding his lance before him to run the helpless Cheyenne through.

Mouse's Road was ready for the charge. He moved quickly aside, dodging the lance and grabbing the Comanche as he passed. He dragged him from his horse and plunged his knife into the Indian's breast. Then he turned and made signs to the rest of the band, for they spoke no common tongue.

"Come on!" he signed, and stood ready to meet the next charge. "Come on!"

Lone Wolf, a Kiowa who had arrived too late for the first attack, turned to a Mexican captive mounted beside him.

"Are you with me?" he asked.

The Mexican nodded and the two of them charged headlong toward the lone Cheyenne.

Mouse's Road didn't await their charge, but ran ahead to meet them. He was sure-footed and swift. And he sprang onto the Mexican's horse and pulled him to the ground. Then, as Mouse's Road

(Continued on page 38)

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Comanche Captive

(Continued from page 19)

Life in Rolling Thunder's camp was pleasant. Lee accompanied the chief on his hunting trips and spent many hours telling the chief of the wonders of the white man's civilization.

Rolling Thunder urged Lee to take a wife. Lee agreed and carefully selected the slim, young Sleek Otter as his bride. Lee was highly pleased with his beautiful young wife, for she was an efficient housewife and a congenial companion.

Despite the liberties allowed him in Rolling Thunder's camp and his marriage, Lee continued to think of escape. Then, unexpectedly, he got his chance.

A conference of Comanche chiefs was called for a village three days' ride distant so Rolling Thunder broke out his ceremonial dress, hung his tomahawk and buffalo-horn drinking cup from his saddle, slung his rifle across his arm, summoned Lee, and they departed. Rolling Thunder was riding his best mount and Lee an aged mule.

They stopped at a neighboring Comanche camp the first night and the chief broke out a supply of high-octane firewater for his guest. The dignified Rolling Thunder let his hair down and consumed enough of the bad liquor to get roaring drunk.

Rolling Thunder was a very sick Indian when he woke the next morning. Lee and the chief hit the trail after a breakfast of rare horse meat and before long Rolling Thunder was feeling very sick in the belly. And he was thirsty.

It was 1:30 that afternoon before Lee and the Chief found water—a puddle too shallow to dip water from with the chief's buffalo-horn drinking cup without dragging up mud. The chief sprang from his horse and flopped face downward over the pool, laying his rifle by his side but leaving his tomahawk swinging from his saddle. Here was Lee's chance!

He grabbed the hatchet, buried it to the handle in the chief's head; he leaped on Rolling Thunder's horse, grabbed the mule's reins, and fled. Lee camped that night, killed the mule, and smoked the meat for a supply on his journey back to civilization. The blood attracted a drove of wolves and panthers that snarled and screamed around the camp all night. Lee didn't sleep.

The next day Lee set out for civilization, traveling over rugged mountain terrain. A week passed . . . two weeks . . . a month . . . still no sign of civilization. Lee killed wild game for food but he grew thinner and thinner. His clothes hung from his frame in tatters, and his three-year-old beard was stained with sweat and dust. Lee kept moving.

Then on the afternoon of the fifty-sixth day he met two Mexican traders on the trail. They led him to civilization.

LEE remained in Texas until he recuperated from his ordeal and then returned to his native New York, where he lived the rest of his life. Lee's fortune was lost in the ill-fated San Francisco mule drive and he died in poverty.

For twenty-five years Nelson Lee had roamed on land and sea in search of adventure, but after his three years with the Comanches, he retired to the quiet solitude of New York. His experiences with the Comanches had been enough to last a lifetime.

Bad Ground

(Continued from page 27)

of frustration when his temporary post failed to reach the cap by six inches. The next moment I screamed in horror as I saw the cap slipping down the post and the ceiling crumbling above him. He threw up his hands to protect his face as he stumbled backwards. There was a split second for me to shoot out an arm and yank him into the safety of the next set, or what I thought was safety. We crashed smack into the ore car and it seemed to be stuck to the rails, for it was half full of muck.

Frantically, we fought the car as we heard the terrifying crack of breaking timbers and the ominous thud and swish of falling rocks and dirt. The sickening thought flashed through my mind that the car had a habit of jumping the track, and if that happened, we were doomed.

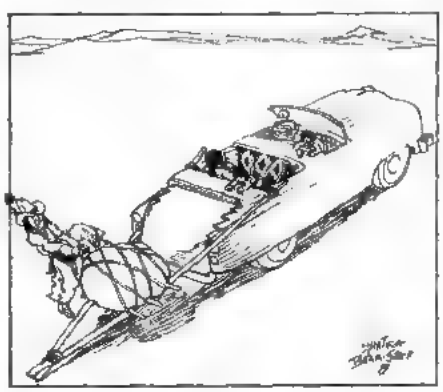
FRANK had lost his miner's lamp but mine was hanging on the car. In the dust-filled shadows we saw immediately behind us timbers starting to buckle. That meant that the second set from where the caving started was gone. We were now fighting the car through the third set when a lagging popped out of the wall and cut the air over our heads. Our tunnel was collapsing like a house of cards, and the third set was closing in on us.

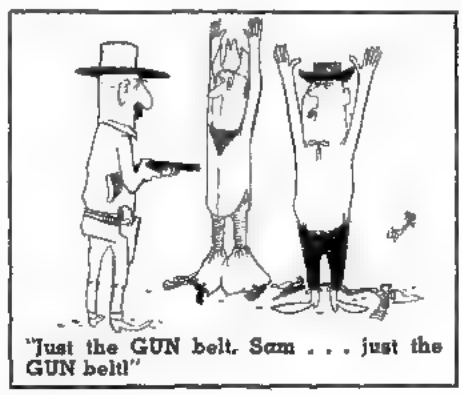
It seemed that all about us we could hear the deadly crack of timbers being crushed into splinters. We knew that what time we had left was a matter of a few precious seconds. We gave the car another gasping shove into the set ahead; it jumped the track and jammed into the side of the tunnel. We slammed into each other in our frantic scramble to go over the car, for that was the only way open for our escape, but there was not enough clearance for both to go over the car and we fell back to the tunnel floor.

The author is shown here panning for gold.

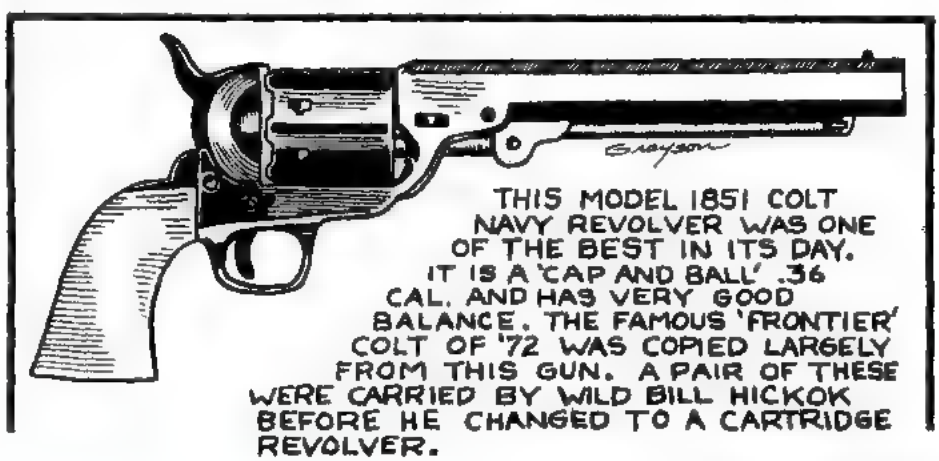
Helpless and speechless we stared at each other, then, the next moment we jumped to our feet as we realized that we were, for the moment, under a set of timbers that were holding firm. One by one, we went over the car and ran down the tunnel. Behind us we heard again the crack of timbers and the rumble of caving earth.

It took us two weeks to dig out the car and drive ahead to the point where the trouble started. Why that set held for those few seconds? Frank said that Feller up yonder just wasn't quite ready for us.





"Just the GUN belt, Sam . . . just the GUN belt!"


Grayson
THIS MODEL 1851 COLT NAVY REVOLVER WAS ONE OF THE BEST IN ITS DAY. IT IS A 'CAP AND BALL' .36 CAL. AND HAS VERY GOOD BALANCE. THE FAMOUS 'FRONTIER' COLT OF '72 WAS COPIED LARGELY FROM THIS GUN. A PAIR OF THESE WERE CARRIED BY WILD BILL HICKOK BEFORE HE CHANGED TO A CARTRIDGE REVOLVER.

ONE MAN'S BLIZZARD

Illustrated by Clay McGaughy

Things got sort of rocky around this cow camp before that cold spell blew itself out.

BY BILL MILLER

EVERYTHING rugged happened to me in the Nevada blizzard which marked the year of "OPERATION HAYLIFT" out of Elko.

I was feeding three hundred mothering cows in sage and short grass when the sky blacked out. Starting easy-like, the wind blew to a gale in an hour. The straight falling snow suddenly rose a quarter-circle and blew horizontal; and even with the feed wagon downwind from stack, it got impossible to load. I finally turned the stock through the barbed wire corral fence, and let 'em feed in the stack. This gave them a break against the driving wind.

My face began to freeze, and I knew the mercury was low. I pulled the down flaps about my ears; but my protruding nose felt like an icicle. I thought of my wood supply—down to the last couple of juniper chunks. Beans and coffee were at low ebb, with barely enough pancake flour for a couple of breakfasts. The supply jeep was overdue. Chances of its arriving now were zero. Supposing it couldn't make it for a month? What if I couldn't negotiate the four miles to our wood lot for fuel? The cow camp was old and leaky as a sieve. I had intended making some repairs, but had never gotten around to it. In a pinch, I could sleep in the barn and get warmth from Mike and Jerry. They were young and fought a tight rein but were docile enough out of harness.

Back at camp I took stock of grub. Enough for a week at most. I found a reserve bottle of brandy, and swigged a good one. The "shot" stirred my blood and brought vigor. I built a fire in the kitchen and pulled in my bed to conserve wood. Outside, I split my last two chunks and loaded them in the woodbox. Might last two days, I figured. As I brought in the last armful of wood I glanced at the weather glass. The mercury read 20 below!

Holy mackerel! I thought. *By tomorrow morning it will drop to 40!*

I made a supper of pancakes and bacon. The kitchen was warm with cookstove heat. I piled into bed, snug and comfortable, shutting my mind against tomorrow.

Next morning I rolled out before daylight. My lamp oil was out; but I had a can of gasoline—dangerous but effective. The wood took hold, and I soon had coffee and a smidgeon of bacon. From now on I was on a food budget.

Out in the hay corral the cows were undercutting the stack and getting some cover on the lee side. Already a dozen calves lay dead from cold and scours. I dragged them out and let the snow cover again. One old cow was stiff, but I let her lay till I brought the team and chain. When I left the house the glass read 38 below zero—cold enough to freeze anything alive. I ran back to the shack before it caught up with me. I could almost feel the blood congeal in my arteries. The fire was still glowing in the stove and I stoked it again. In a pinch I could drag in some sage butts. I looked at the clock on the stove. It said nine-thirty. There would be daylight time to make the juniper lot. I made a break for the barn, and the trouble started.

JERRY, the off horse, always fought the headstall. I usually gave him time to think it over, then, when he dropped his head, I'd slip it on. Today I was in a rush to get going. I snubbed his head tight to the manger and tried force. No-go with Jerry. One jerk, the rope broke; and I slammed against the rail—bang across the kidneys.

Wood had to be got, so I managed to hook the team to the old work wagon—one of those ancients with a high, diamond spring seat. Halfway to the junipers, we jolted over a snow-covered log and WHAM went the spring seat, rusted through age and exposure. I managed to swing to the wagon bed and curb the team, though the pain in my back nearly killed me. Finally Mike and Jerry smoothed out, and we were making good time when all hell broke loose. Here came a thousand antelope tearing through the rimrock fence. God, I thought—with everything else, I would have to oust the antelope, and make the fence tight.

At the junipers I couldn't find any ready-cut wood; so I felled a dead tree and dragged the limbs aboard. My lame back made a horror of this, but I took the edge off the pain with the help of half a fifth of brandy.

That night my dreams were nightmares. I could hear coyotes howling a deadly chorus. Next morning I knew why. Ten calves were missing on the count, besides eight more frozen alongside the stack.

Driving staples and stretching wire at forty below ain't fun; but I got the job done by dark. My *savina* saddle horse stumbled a hundred times on the sub-snow lava rock and

(Continued on page 38)

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ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION P

Whiskey-drinking braggart though he was, nobody disputed Mike Fink's claim that he was

KING OF THE KEELBOATMEN

BY MARTIN MARECEK

Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano

THE story of the expansion of the American frontier is the story of the rugged boatmen who moved along the great rivers. Typical of all the boatmen who ever handled an oar or pulled on a *cordelle* was one man, Mike Fink.

Around the campfires, in log cabins, and in taverns, circulated tall yarns of this rough, tough, drinking, shooting, brawling boatman who called himself King of the Keelboatmen. To this day, in some of the remote villages along the lower Mississippi, mothers frighten naughty children into good behavior with the dread warning: "Mike Fink'll git ye, if ye don't watch out!"

Mike spent his boyhood in the little frontier settlement of Fort Pitt; he grew up in an atmosphere where physical strength and endurance, marksmanship, and courage were the only worthwhile attributes and guarantee of survival. Beyond the little patches of cleared land surrounding the stockade at Fort Pitt lurked the hostile red man—a challenge young Mike could not ignore.

At sixteen, already a crack shot and deadly with the hunting knife and tomahawk, Mike joined the Pennsylvania Rangers. As a scout, he would travel alone deep into the Indian-haunted wilderness to spy on the sullen tribes. But Mike was not content to spy just for the purpose of gathering useful information. If he spotted a small hunting party of braves, he would trail them skillfully during the day waiting for darkness to settle down on the gloomy forest. Once the warriors were settled in their blankets and asleep, Mike would move in soundlessly as a shadow and cleave heads. He considered this a sport superior to hunting bears, and not nearly so dangerous.

Once he stalked a deer into an Indian-infested area where any error of woodscraft could mean quick death. He was taking aim at his quarry when he suddenly observed an Indian in a clump of brush sighting on the same deer. Now here *was* a jam—but Mike figured a way out. He pulled down on the Indian instead of the deer. At the precise split-second the Indian fired at the deer, Mike pulled trigger. The guns roared with one report—and both deer and Indian fell together. Mike slipped away through the woods and returned safely to the fort.

In Pitt, the taverns were the center of social activity. Mike was a steady customer and he learned to drink and fight with the best of them. Trappers, woodsmen, and rivermen all contributed to his education. In no time at all, the black-haired, husky youngster became noted for his whiskey-drinking capacity and ability to handle himself in any brawl.

AS the frontier moved westward and Pittsburgh became semi-civilized, Mike looked elsewhere for the excitement he craved. He had heard colorful tales of adventures on the Mississippi and the Ohio rivers, and he itched to get away and see for himself if they were true. He got his chance sooner than he expected.

One day the swaggering Fink was hurling insults at boatmen in a river front tavern. Promptly the powerful oarsman of one crew invited him to step out in the street and repeat his remarks. Outside, the pair of them went at it rough-and-tumble—no holds barred. Kicking, gouging, strangling, the two hardy youths fought for two hours before Mike finally wore his man down by sheer bulldog stubbornness. Dust-covered and bloody, victor and vanquished went arm-in-arm back into the tavern with the cheering spectators at their heels. Mugs of whiskey washed down dust and blood together. The patroon of the oarsman's keelboat set up another round of drinks and offered Mike a job. He accepted; and in that moment an American legend was born.

In his early river trips, Mike got an eye-full of young America pushing inland. He met all kinds of men: honest emigrants, thugs, thieves, and gamblers. Rugged men all, yet none tougher than the keelboatmen.

Mike Fink soon became known up and down the Ohio. For all his drinking and carousing, he became a top boatman and quickly won a reputation for delivering both goods and

He raised his rifle, fired—and Carpenter fell with a hole in the center of his forehead.

passengers in all kinds of weather and through the swiftest of tricky currents

His fame and his trade grew, and he moved on to the "Big River," the Mississippi, with his boat and hardboiled crew. On the old Mississip' he acquired friends and enemies in every river town between St. Louis and New Orleans.

Weird are some of the tales told of Mike Fink on the Big River. Once, while lounging on deck with his crew at the St. Louis levee, he got to boasting of his skill with a rifle. Challenged to prove it, Mike took another swig at his jug of corn likker and chose for his target the rather prominent heel of a Negro lad sitting astride a barrel a hundred yards away. As he raised his rifle, Mike grinned: "I'll trim that feller's heel so he can wear a genteel boot." The rifle cracked, and the Negro scampered wildly up the levee screaming in pain.

The town marshal soon appeared, accompanied by the Negro's angry master. Mike was arrested and taken to the courthouse to be tried. His roughneck crew tagged along, cursing and peering at the marshal. Inside the courthouse, before a French justice, they kept up their raucous heckling.

The judge spoke half English and half French. Mike imitated the judge in broken English and the crowd roared with laughter. The judge waved his hands and yelled for quiet and the crowd yelled back. Finally the harried justice forsook English altogether and began to chatter in rapid-fire French. Sheer chaos resulted. In desperation, the little Frenchman ordered the marshal to clear the courtroom, Mike and all. Fink bowed from the waist and marched out at the head of his motley companions.

STEAMBOATS began to appear on the rivers after 1811, starting a new era and way of life in the domain of the keel and flatboatmen. As the steamers began to encroach upon the lucrative river trade, a bitter enmity sprang up between the old-time boatmen and the officers and crews of the hated "smoke-pots." War resulted whenever the rivals met, and Mike and his followers were always in the thick of the fighting.

For Mike, this senseless feud reached an idiotic climax in 1822. That fall, Mike and a young comrade named Carpenter were nearing St. Louis in a keel captained by Mike. Suddenly Captain Fink spied a steamer heading for the same narrow channel he was approaching, but in the opposite direction. Mike had been drinking heavily, and now he stood on the bow of his boat and bellowed to the skipper of the smoke-pot to make way. It was too late for the cumbersome steamer to change course, and Mike was too stubborn to give in. Both skippers held their course, heading straight for each other.

The steamboat's pilot blew his whistle furiously. Passengers crowded the steamer's rails and shouted in terror as the heavily loaded keel bore down on them. Steamboat and keel collided head-on. Both boats sank; a gaping hole in the keel, and ripped seams, punched-in bow, and toppled stacks finishing off the steamboat. Passengers spilled into the Mississippi in scores. "Every man for himself!" yelled Mike as the stricken keel went down. He struck out for shore, swimming easily and powerfully.

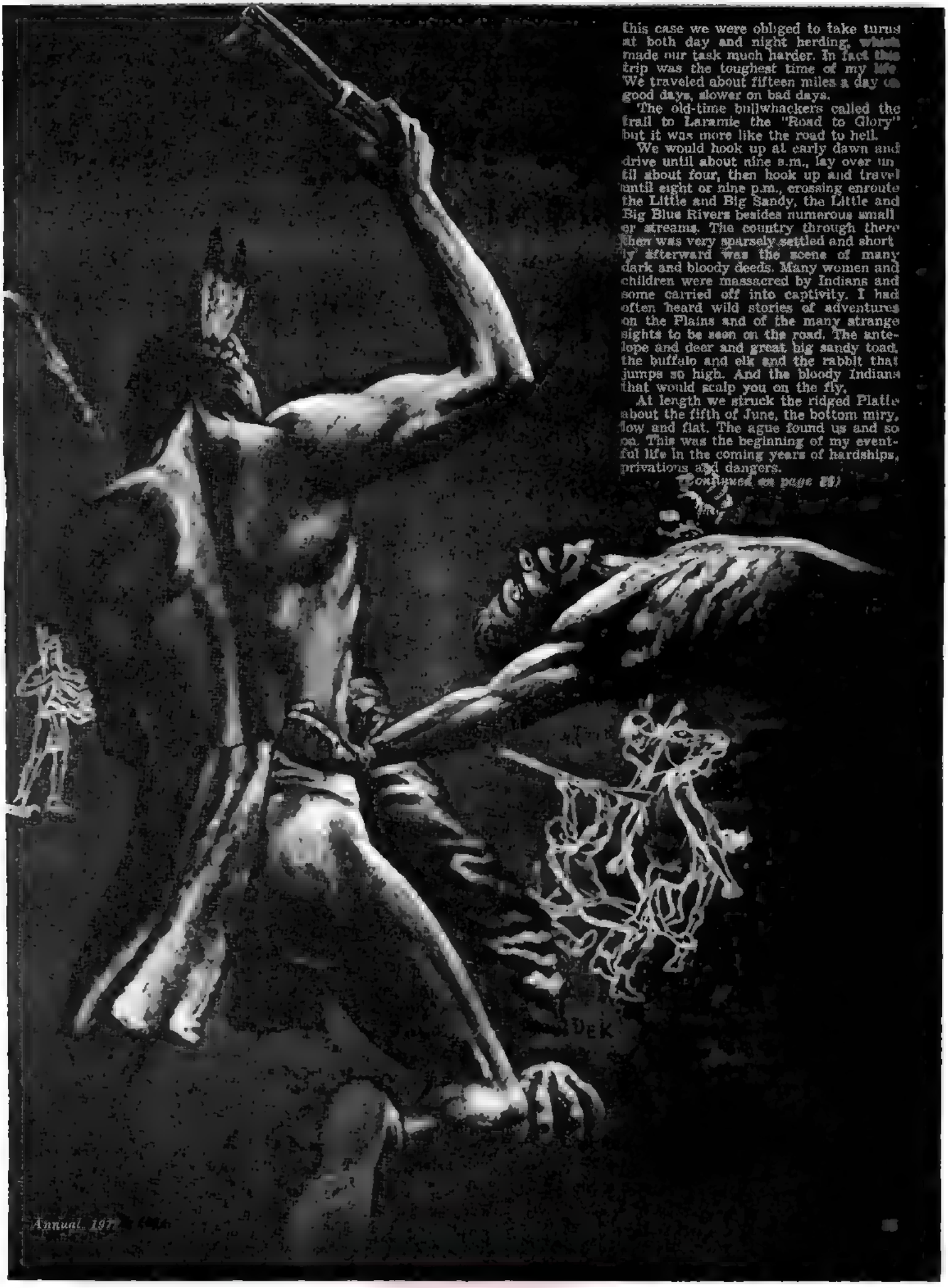
ST. LOUIS, in that hectic year of 1822, was a rich and turbulent fur trading center situated at the edge of the frontier and the vast wilderness stretching beyond to the west. In its short history, the town had changed nationalities several times. Bejeweled Spanish ladies strolled the streets, dandy French gentlemen, sinewy *voyageurs*, blanketed Indians, and buckskin-clad mountain men. Mike and young Carpenter holed up in a river-front tavern and proceeded to enjoy themselves all that winter.

The following spring the *Missouri Republican* carried an ad for "100 enterprising young men to follow Major Andrew Henry to ascend the Missouri River to its source for a period of perhaps two or three years."

Now here was a venture right down Mike's alley. He

(Continued on page 38)

Matt Bowier, the wagon
sing for bullwhackers. Their
of twenty-six Murphy wagons
(prairie schooners) was ready to start
or Laramie. The miles ahead
ge, ambitious and anxious to
man's work.
en the day of departure arrived,
312 work oxen were driven into a corral,
among them a number of unbroken
wild and unmanageable. At a
gnal from the boss all the teamsters
for the trip, six yoke being allowed
wagon which carried from 6,500
to 7,000 pounds of freight.
Hands were scarce on account of the
e often obliged
were two other boys beside me who
what improved by swapping a few of
the worst animals for others that would
pull. We made five miles the first day.
learn was how to swear. We cussed
the critters all day and dreamed up new
words at night, only the m.p.h.
(miles per hour) remained the same. A
steer will go just so fast no matter what
you call him or how much you whip him.
The next morning there was some
cattle they had worked the day before.
Some couldn't remember which ones be-
cause a lot of the critters looked alike.
I managed during the
me a fairly good team.
to be furnished to all the trains but in
WE WATCHED THEM DIE!



this case we were obliged to take turns at both day and night herding, which made our task much harder. In fact this trip was the toughest time of my life. We traveled about fifteen miles a day on good days, slower on bad days.

The old-time bullwhackers called the trail to Laramie the "Road to Glory" but it was more like the road to hell.

We would hook up at early dawn and drive until about nine a.m., lay over until about four, then hook up and travel until eight or nine p.m., crossing enroute the Little and Big Sandy, the Little and Big Blue Rivers besides numerous smaller streams. The country through there then was very sparsely settled and shortly afterward was the scene of many dark and bloody deeds. Many women and children were massacred by Indians and some carried off into captivity. I had often heard wild stories of adventures on the Plains and of the many strange sights to be seen on the road. The antelope and deer and great big sandy toad, the buffalo and elk and the rabbit that jumps so high. And the bloody Indians that would scalp you on the fly.

At length we struck the ridged Platte about the fifth of June, the bottom miry, low and flat. The ague found us and so on. This was the beginning of my eventful life in the coming years of hardships, privations and dangers.

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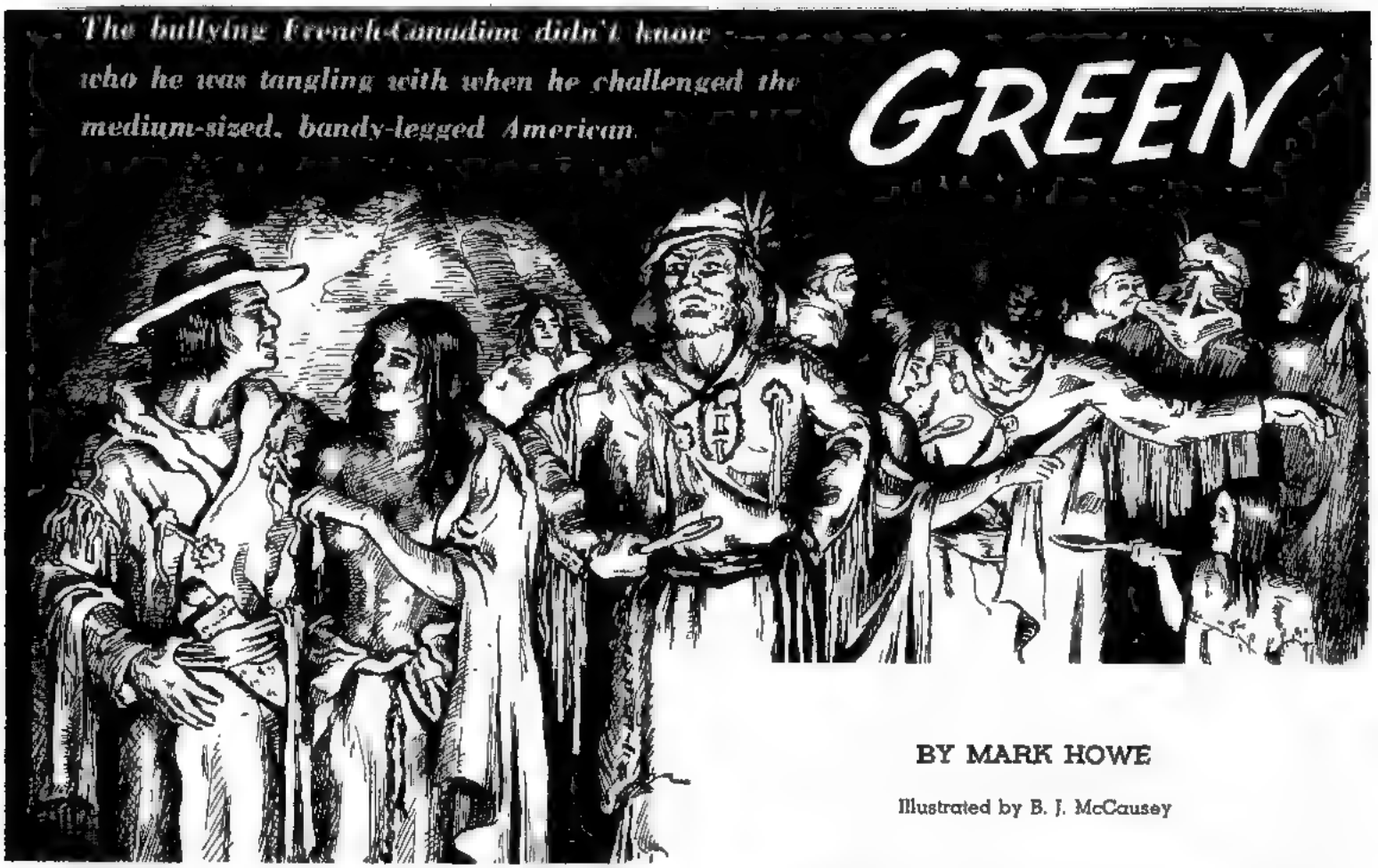
DEK

The bullying French-Canadian didn't know — who he was tangling with when he challenged the medium-sized, bandy-legged American

GREEN



BY MARK HOWE

Illustrated by B. J. McCausey

THE 1835 trappers' rendezvous on Green River, in present Wyoming, was an uproarious affair. The previous trapping season had been a first-class one, which meant that nearly everybody was well heeled. The Rocky Mountain Fur Company had brought along a goodly supply of that corroding, mind-shattering brand of whisky known as Taos Lightning. In addition, old Chief Running Around and a large band of Arapaho Indians had arrived. Among them were many maidens whose girlish hearts were quickly turned topsy-turvy by the hot, bold eyes of the Mountain Men.

Liquor, beaver, and coquettish young squaws—a combination that spelled dynamite any time on the frontier.

As soon as the Arapahoes set up their buffalo-hide tepees a quarter of a mile above the rendezvous, things began to hum. The kick-off was the popular Soup Dance. The trappers, as fond of this provocative pastime as the young Indian braves, boldly took over the dance, unceremoniously thrusting the Indians aside and compelling them to play the part of sullen spectators. Being in the minority, the angry warriors could neither throw the Mountain Men out of camp nor prevent their sisters and sweethearts from dancing with them.

Each night, therefore, the gay squaws dressed in their best clothes, painted their faces in the gaudiest of colors, and made the visitors from the rendezvous welcome. When all were ready, two lines were formed; trappers on one side, squaws on the other, facing inward. Between them were kettles of soup, and each squaw held a large horn spoon in her hand. When the drums began to throb, each maiden, after dipping her spoon in the nearest kettle, danced coyly toward the trappers. To the favored one she artfully extended her spoon, then ran back to her own line, followed by the man. This teasing procedure was repeated again and again until she allowed him to drink from the spoon. Then she ran—not too fast nor too far—with her admirer in pursuit. When he overtook her, he enveloped her in the folds of his blanket and the serious love-making began. Next day he gave her a present in return for her favors. If, on the other hand, she spurned a man's advances, she threw the soup in his face during the dance.

UNTIL the trappers barged in, the Soup Dance was strictly decorous, according to age-old Indian standards. After that, it was anything but decorous by anybody's standards! The Mountain Men introduced several innovations, all of which the young squaws highly approved. Not the least of these was hearty kissing, white man fashion—a stimulating substitute for gentle touching of noses, Arapaho style.

The party was whooping up splendidly when medium-sized, bandy-legged Kit Carson rode into the rendezvous at the head of his own party of free trappers. First, business-like as always, Kit sold his furs and bought his supplies for the next season. These necessary transactions completed, he looked about for entertainment. There were the usual gambling games going full-blast, but these were not for Kit. Bored, he was thinking of heading back for his trapping grounds, when somebody told him about the Soup Dance in the nearby Arapaho camp. That night he rode upriver to Running Around's camp to see what it was all about.

The dance was in full swing when he arrived. A casual glance told him the merry pastime had degenerated greatly since he had last seen it on the Arkansas River; that was evident from the behavior of the trappers. Most boisterous of the lot was a huge French-Canadian named Shunan, whom the Indians called "Bad Medicine." He laughed drunkenly, roared like a bull, and put his great hairy paws upon whatever woman suited his fancy. No one dared to interfere, for he had already killed several men who angered him. When he grew tired of one maiden's kisses, he thrust her roughly aside to grab another, regardless of whose partner she was.

"By Gar, I wan' thees woman! Get out!" he bellowed. And the unlucky man slunk away without a word of protest.

Not long after Kit arrived, Shunan seized a comely young squaw named Waa-nibe, or Grass Singing, Running Around's daughter. She struggled fiercely to free herself from the trapper's bear-like arms. She fought him like a cornered wild creature, sought to scratch out his eyes, and finally managed to break away. Down the river bank she fled, with the French-Canadian in hot pursuit. Bent upon escape, she easily eluded him in the dense willows bordering the stream. When Shunan came back, angry and panting from the chase, the trappers laughed at him.

KIT CARSON laughed loudest of all, and freely spoke his opinion of any man who would deliberately insult a woman, "even a pore ignorat Injun." Somebody warned him who the big French-Canadian was, and what he had done to several men since coming to the rendezvous.

RIVER SHINDIG

"Wal, now!" drawled Kit, "that's all plumb interestin'. Busted up the biggest men in camp, did he? And still he ain't man enough to make a leetle 'Rapaho squaw come! She's got too much ginger for an ugly old he-coon like him."

Next day Waa-nibe, in company with a girl friend, rode her white pony down to the rendezvous. Kit watched her riding artlessly along, naked to the waist after the fashion of her people, her glossy black hair drawn back in two braids, with a becoming touch of vermilion at the temples. And she noticed *him*, not once or twice, but several times. That, however, he did not know.

That night Kit was at the Arapaho village long before the lines formed for the Soup Dance. When it started, he planted himself, wrapped in his blanket, directly opposite Waa-nibe. To his deep chagrin she danced up to almost anyone in the line but him. Could it be that his medium height and bandy legs marked him in her sight as something less than a man?

"Wagh!" he growled. "I'll show her a thing or two before the rendezvous is over."

At long last she relented. The drums throbbed in a compelling rhythm. Now she danced slowly toward him, her great black eyes looking directly into his. Nearer and nearer she came. By all that was sacred, she was going to let him drink from her spoon this time! Kit, young and ardent, forgot time, place and everything else. He and the dark, vivacious Arapaho maid existed in a world apart.

Suddenly, the magic spell upon Kit was broken by a violent shove; someone had rammed into him viciously from behind. "Get out, bowlegged American runt!" bellowed a heavy voice. "Thees is *my* woman. Let her look at a *real* man."

Knocked off balance by the unexpected shove, Kit staggered to one side. His blanket fell from his shoulders to the ground. Dazed, he stooped and picked it up. When he stood erect again, his head was clear. He took two steps, and was standing again in his place, his body pressed against Shunan's great bulk.

The French-Canadian snarled, half-turned, and doubled his hairy fists. He glared with bloodshot eyes at the youth who dared to do what no other man had dared in years.

"Sacre enfant de garce—" he began, then stopped.

Something in Kit Carson's blue eyes paralyzed his foul tongue.

"Air ye talkin' to me, Shunan?" inquired Kit mildly.

The mild question restored Shunan's power of speech. "*Oui*, by Gar!" he exploded with a show of his usual arrogance. "I wan' thees woman."

"Shore, you can have her," agreed Kit smoothly, "*if* she chooses you. If she chooses me, I take her. Savvy?"

Shunan cursed in his red beard and turned leering eyes upon Waa-nibe. She backed away from him in alarm. Kit looked at her, pleadingly. When nothing more happened, the girl danced toward the two white men again; nearer and nearer. Shunan could bear the suspense no longer. Bellowing like a buffalo bull, he reached out his great arms to seize her. Waa-nibe leaped nimbly to one side and flung both soup and spoon into his face.

Then she stepped close to Kit and lifted her face to receive the white man's kiss. Lowering his head, he brushed her lips tenderly with his own. Then, wrapping his blanket around her slender figure, Kit led her from the circle of firelight into the shadows. Stupefied, Shunan watched them go.

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The muzzle of Shunan's rifle shifted. "Sacre bleu!" he snarled. Rifle and pistol spoke together.

The Headless Warrior

(Continued from page 29)

plunged his knife into the screaming Mexican, Lone Wolf dismounted and attacked on foot, holding his lance above his head. He had already begun his death thrust when Mouse's Road slipped beneath the lance.

Grabbing him about the waist, Mouse's Road threw Lone Wolf to the ground and stabbed him in the hip. Struggling free, Lone Wolf tried to run away, but Mouse's Road caught him by his hair ornament and thrust his knife into his back. But the blade was deflected by the Kiowa's silver hair plate and snapped in two.

Mouse's Road continued to stab him with the knife stub while the Kiowa screamed for help from his tribesmen. But no help came, and Lone Wolf feigned death to escape the fury of the powerful Cheyenne.

ANOTHER Comanche charged Mouse's Road, holding his lance well forward, intent on a kill. But Mouse's Road retrieved Lone Wolf's lance, turning in time to fend off the Comanche's thrust. Then he drove his own lance into the Indian's stomach, lifting him off his horse and holding him high above his head. Carrying him thus, he marched forward, then threw the Comanche's limp body back into the faces of his enemy. He signed for them to renew their charge.

The leader of the Kiowa-Comanche band stepped out and made signs to Mouse's Road.

"You have fought bravely," he signed. "To honor your courage, we give you your freedom. Return to your people and tell them what has happened here today."

Mouse's Road refused to go.

"My brothers have been killed," he signed to his enemy. "The rest of my life would be filled with sorrow if I left them. I must die here with my kind."

Then Mouse's Road prepared to meet the next attack. But the Kiowas and Comanches had no more stomach for the fight. They turned and rode away toward their camp. Catching up the horse of the Comanche he had killed, Mouse's Road charged after the retreating enemy.

Two Kiowas who had been away hunting during the battle came up to the hill in time to see their tribesmen fleeing from the lone Cheyenne horseman. They crouched behind a bush and waited until Mouse's Road came within range. Then they both raised their hunting rifles and fired together.

One ball missed and the other struck Mouse's Road in the thigh, knocking him from his horse and breaking his leg. Still Mouse's Road lost none of his courage. Even though he could no longer stand, he sat with his lance ready, challenging the Kiowas and Comanches to come to him and fight.

But the enemy only circled about him well out of range of his lance. When the two hunters joined their tribesmen, one of them sneaked up behind the disabled Mouse's Road and shot him in the back.

As soon as he fell, a Kiowa warrior charged in and with one blow of his war axe severed Mouse's Road's head from his body.

The weird thing that happened next struck terror into the hearts of all the Indians present. **The decapitated trunk of the lone Cheyenne suddenly jerked and sat erect!**

Although this was undoubtedly caused by a reflex action, similar to that of a chicken when decapitated, the superstitious Indians thought that Mouse's Road's spirit was rising up to fight once more! They fled in horror, believing they had killed a wizard.

INTO camp they raced, shouting in terror that the Cheyenne wizard was coming to kill them all. Quickly the tepees were struck and loaded on the travois. Before nightfall the entire village had fled from Big Sand Creek, still fearing that the Headless Warrior would follow and wreak revenge.

This story has lived down through the years of Kiowa and Comanche lore. It is told by these two tribes only, since all the Cheyennes involved in the fight were killed. The Kiowas and Comanches admit that Mouse's Road was the bravest warrior that ever lived.

If he was not, who can name a braver?

One Man's Blizzard

(Continued from page 31)

finally dumped me heavily when he went to his knees. Now I had a damaged shoulder, which had struck a rock. But the job on the fence was done, and I could fight the pain with heat.

Next two days were hell a-plenty. My grub ran out, except for two rounds of batter cakes and a taste of sugar to sweeten. From here on in I was a child of destiny. The stock had hay; all I had was an empty belly. Then I came to life. High time! I grabbed my 30-30 and took off for the corral. With fire, I could have young veal.

I'd hardly reached the cows when I heard the roar of a plane. I looked up and saw the pilot dip a "Howdy." Then I saw sacks dropping toward me. There were beans and canned goods. Swathed in sweaters were two bottles of brandy. A note attached to one of the sacks read: "Sorry, Bill. We can't help the weather. Keep chin up. Good luck."

A week later the wind died, the sun shone, the mercury soared. Life was good again.

King of the Keelboatmen

(Continued from page 33)

and young Carpenter joined the expedition as trappers and hunters. The records of the expedition show that another young fellow destined to be a famous figure in Western history signed for the trip—Jim Bridger. Grizzled old Hugh Glass, who was to survive a tussle with maddened she-bear on the journey, Broken Hand Tom Fitzpatrick, and Jed Smith were other stalwarts in Major Henry's company.

On April 15, two large keels set off on the memorable trip.

Unlike the Ohio and the Mississippi, the Missouri was new to Mike. Currents were treacherous and shifty, hiding the whole trunk of a tree one minute, then slapping it wickedly against the bow of a boat the next. Shifting sandbars made navigation hazardous. Everybody on board took turns on the *cordelle;* even Mike had no time to get drunk or cut didoes on this trip.

Moving up the "Big Muddy," the expedition met French trappers going downstream in long canoes loaded with fur pelts to be sold in St. Louis. On the banks they frequently saw Indians, shaking bows and war-clubs and whooping shrilly. Often an arrow came slanting out toward the boats, but the range was too great and nobody was hit.

At Fort Osage, the leaders of the party went ashore to pay a social call and exchange the news. The traders warned them that all the tribes along the Missouri were "pizen" mean and increasingly restless.

The news made Major Henry anxious to get located for the winter trapping operations as soon as possible, particularly as he had lost one of his boats in a collision with a snag just before reaching the fort. Crowded aboard the one boat, the adventurers moved on.

AT the mouth of the Yellowstone River, Henry decided to headquarter. On a tongue of land between the Yellowstone and the Missouri, in a spot ideally located for defense, a group of log cabins was surrounded by a stout stockade. The Major named the place Fort Henry.

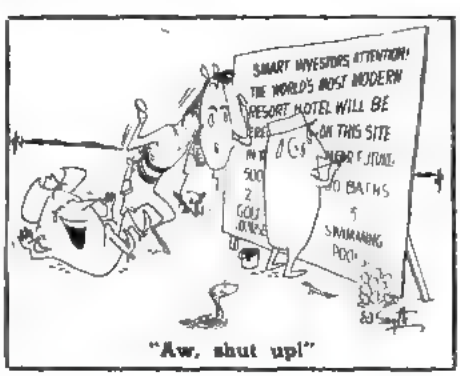
Preparations for winter trapping were brisk and business-like, with the trappers assigned in pairs to certain areas. Mike and Carpenter were "skin trappers" as distinguished from hired trappers; each being paid for pelts brought in instead of wages. Both men, being "independent as hogs on ice," preferred that arrangement.

Trapping was old stuff to Mike, but brand-new to Carpenter. Quickly, under the older man's careful teaching, Carpenter became as expert as his "adopted" father. He sought to emulate everything his idol did, even to drinking and brawling at the fort tavern. One way of proving their comradeship and mutual trust was a spectacular stunt that involved shooting a cup of whiskey from each other's head.

Mike and Carpenter had many admirers at Fort Henry, but there were those who did not approve of their boisterous ways nor of the wild manner in which Carpenter was developing under Fink's tutelage. The bolder spirits among the latter faction openly criticized Mike, and Mike retaliated by challenging them to rough-and-tumble combat.

Tension grew within the fort. Mike was drinking heavily now, and growing more morose and unstable after each bout with the bottle. In one of his infrequent sober moments, Mike decided to leave the stockade and hole up in a cave on the Yellowstone. Carpenter, ignoring the advice of well-wishers, went with him. Shortly after, rumors were heard in the tavern that Carpenter had quarreled with Mike and was about to break the partnership and return to the fort. A sense of impending tragedy hung heavy in the air.

Yet, a few days later, both men were



"Aw, shut up!"

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back drinking together at the tavern. "We're jes' as good friends as ever!" crowed Mike—and added belligerently: "And if any of you bastards don't believe it, speak up!" Nobody spoke.

As the evening wore on, Mike suggested that they prove their renewed comradeship with the old stunt of shooting at the whiskey cups. Carpenter enthusiastically agreed, and Mike placed a cup on his head. Carpenter, unsteady from too much whiskey, braced himself and fired. The cup went flying as the crowd roared, but the bullet nicked Mike's scalp, drawing blood.

Mike stood glowering at Carpenter, but didn't say a word. In turn, the young man took his position with the brimming cup atop his head. Mike lifted his rifle, aimed—then suddenly lowered the heavy Hawken. "Come on, Mike, what the hell's the matter with you?" yelled Carpenter impatiently.

Mike shook his head as if to clear the whiskey fumes from his befuddled brain. He raised his rifle again, fired—and Carpenter fell with a hole in the center of his forehead.

The shocked crowd was silent as the killer stumbled out the door.

WHETHER deliberate murder or cruel accident, Mike Fink paid for his terrible act. Sadly he mumbled to anybody who would listen that Carpenter was like a son to him, and that the shooting was an accident. It wasn't often that he could get anybody to listen to his remorseful ravings, for the trappers avoided him as a crafty, lying murderer.

Finally Talbott, the big gunsmith, got up the nerve to publicly denounce Mike as a foul murderer. Mike, feeling compelled to prove his innocence to Talbott, went to his shop. As his haggard figure appeared in the doorway, Talbott snatched up a heavy pistol and shouted to Mike not to enter.

Tearfully pleading his innocence, Mike moved toward the gunsmith. The pistol roared, and a bloody Mike Fink fell to the floor

Talbott knelt at Mike's side. With awful effort the dying man gasped, "I-I wanted you to know that I didn't mean to kill my boy. I swear to God that I didn't mean . . . "

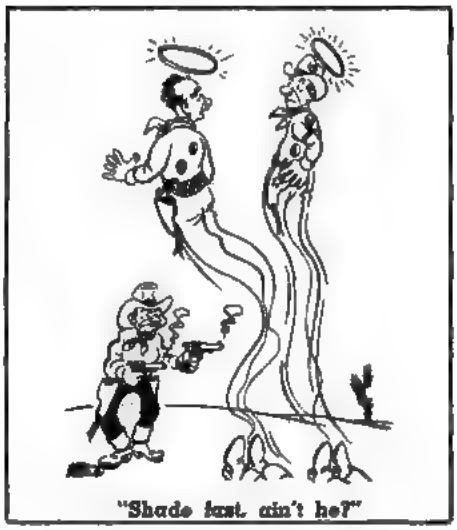
Blood clogged in Mike's throat. His head dropped to one side; the King of the Keelboatmen was dead.

We Watched Them Die!

(Continued from page 35)

THE OVERLAND road was constantly lined with freight or emigrant trains. Many convert Mormons were enroute to Salt Lake (Zion) -Welch, Danes, Russians and English—who were the queerest dressed, and most peculiar looking people I had ever seen. Their draught animals were mostly cows. Some had cows and horses or mules hitched together.

We were now on the Plains proper, a vast expanse of prairie destitute of timber. For fuel we used buffalo chips or sagebrush, the latter being scarce. Game was plenty all along but very timid. The islands along the sluggish Platte were covered thickly with willow, wild plum, currant, grape and cherry bushes. The main road followed mostly along the foothills of the low, rolling, ridged Platte where the land was dry and had a few million less mosquitoes to the square foot.



"Shade fast, ain't he?"

One day John Moore, a friend of mine, while in the act of drawing a shotgun from the wagon to shoot a jackrabbit, was killed. The hammer caught on something, discharging one barrel, the entire charge striking him in the breast. With many tears we buried him along the Platte

Them days a teamster was rated according to his ability to swear. The louder he could cuss the better. He was able to urge his team through bad places, with a whip fifteen to twenty feet in length. The stock was about twelve inches long, made of hickory, the lash being dressed buck or buffalo hide With this persuader dashing and cracking and a string of oaths pouring forth, an ox would generally do his best.

We arrived at Ft. Laramie about the first of July, unloaded and started on our homeward journey. We had seen plenty of Indians all along the way. We traded and trafficked with them, they not showing any hostility toward us. Ranches or trading stores were scattered all along our route every fifteen or twenty miles, their principal stock in trade being whisky.

On our return we met a Mormon immigrant train of 400 families. The women came to our camp and succeeded in persuading three of our teamsters to turn back and accompany their people to Zion. They told of Utah's fair, beautiful, slim and lovely daughters and said that men there were allowed all the wives they could take care of. Had there been any pretty girls in the outfit they might have been some inducement for me

I and two others were given the job of night herding. One night the latter part of July we camped at Cottonwood Bend, six or seven miles west of Plum Creek and about thirty miles west of Ft. Kearney. Up to this time there had been no open Indian hostility, only occasional marauding bands stealing stock and committing other petty depredations. That night we kept the cattle between the corral and the river, which were some 300 yards apart. As was usual at daybreak, we drove the cattle to the corral. The men at once commenced yoking.

We found that some three or four head were missing. It was then light enough to see them on an island about 200 feet from the mainland where they had strayed during the night. I mounted a mule and started to bring them in. When I was within 100 feet of the riverbank, my mule showed signs of fear, throwing its ears forward and snorting. In an instant arrows were flying thick around me and about 100 Indians came rushing out from under the riverbank yelling as though the infernal regions had broke loose.

I WAS STRUCK in the breast with an arrow and others slightly wounded me in the leg and foot. My mule turned on the instant and made for camp. I drew my Colt .45 and fired behind me, not being able to take aim. The teamsters opened fire on the Indians and the train that had overtaken us late that night was corralled some 200 yards back from us towards the hills and in lower ground, that the Indians had evidently not seen. They also commenced firing rapidly with revolvers as the Indians approached.

I, very much frightened, reached the corral and grabbed my rifle, an old muzzleloader, having fired my remaining five pistol shots. Some twenty-five or thirty Indians ran through the corral (the cattle were not yet hooked on the tongue but were most all yoked), the others circling around the outside, firing showers of arrows. A few had oldfashioned firearms. I had pulled the arrow from my breast, which had struck the pleat of my buckskin shirt preventing it from penetrating barely over the steel point. I was so excited I scarcely felt any pain.

The war party rushed through the corral. I fired my rifle at one Indian who wore a large war bonnet, mounted on a black pony. He fell from his saddle. Another one fell at the same time. The others retreated under the riverbank. The boys claimed several others were wounded. If so, their horses carried them away.

Two of our men besides me were wounded but not dangerously. Those two braves who had fallen were fine specimens of Sioux warriors painted and feathered as was their custom in war times with only a breech-clout and moccasins. The dead one was shot with a rifle ball and as I was the only one in the outfit who had a rifle, I fell heir to his fine black pony. By that time another wagontrain that was going our way had approached to within a short distance. We then all joined forces and traveled three wagons abreast. As no one felt disposed to kill the wounded Indians, we left them both where they fell but took their arms, which consisted of bows and arrows, knives and lances with pennants.

We then moved forward. As soon as we were a half mile away the Indians returned and carried off the two that had fallen. We left two wounded oxen and the ones on the island for the Indians, who then crossed the river and followed down the opposite bank four or five miles to near Plum Creek. Here they recrossed the river and followed down under the bank, keeping themselves concealed.

A SIX-MULE train of ten wagons was strung out traveling westward. The owner of the outfit made eleven men all told. There were also with the train two women, the wife and sister of the proprietor. The Indians now charged and attacked the outfit, yelling their frightful war whoops. The mules were stampeded in every direction. It was then about nine a.m. and our outfit was not more than two miles from the scene.

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We hurried the cattle forward as fast as possible.

Had we left our teams and hurried afoot at the top of our speed, we might possibly have reached the scene in time to have rendered some assistance. However, no one seemed willing to take the chance and no one appeared to be in command of our party, many of whom were terror-stricken and paralyzed with fear while the massacre was going on. When the attack was made, the owner of the train was riding a mule about 400 or 500 yards in advance of the train.

A few of the teamsters stuck to their teams while others ran toward us, as we were in plain view, but were pursued and killed. Mules are naturally afraid of Indians; consequently, it was some time before the Indians succeeded in checking them. Several teams headed for the river a quarter-of-a-mile or more distant and were only checked when the heavily loaded wagons were half-buried in the quicksand of the Platte. Other wagons were upset, their contents scattered all over the prairie.

Some teams in turning broke the tongues of the wagons and then stampeded in the wildest confusion or became tangled in the harness where they stood kicking and braying. Two wagons were loaded with flour. The Indians emptied many sacks of their contents, taking merely the empty sacks. Part of the Indians were engaged in butchering the teamsters while others were attending to the mules, unhooking them from the wagons and herding them toward the river with the harness on.

The scene now in plain sight was one of the greatest confusion and consternation and the most horrible sight I had ever witnessed. To watch those infernal Indians chasing and spearing with lances, shooting with arrows and firearms, the poor fellows was a sickening as well as a horrifying sight—and not a single Indian killed or a shot fired by the teamsters. We saw one white woman being dragged from a wagon which the Indians had completely surrounded. She was placed on a pony in front of an Indian who held her there and thus carried her across the river.

IN A SHORT time all the white men had fallen. Then came the work of mutilating their bodies which they thus shot full of arrows. Tongues were ripped out while the victims were yet alive, eyes gouged out with knives, and other mutilations too horrible to describe. All were scalped. One scalp with short red hair was picked up on the scene by one of our men.

The sister of the proprietor (John W. Martin) jumped out of the wagon when first attacked and hid among the tall grass in a slough near the road. The Indians saw her when she left the wagon and would have returned for her when they had completed the massacre had not we been so near. Although she was a half-mile from the scene of the massacre, the teams had run that far and some much farther before they were checked.

In the meantime the massacre was seen by the lookout from Fort Kearney through his field glasses and a detachment of troops were now hastening to the rescue. As they passed near where the woman was hidden they saw her and brought her along. She was so terrified that she did not for some time realize the situation or the terrible fate of her relations and the teamsters. As was generally the case, the soldiers arrived too late to be of any service, only to help bury the dead, who were placed in one grave with its simple inscription: "Murdered by Indians."

The horrors of that day made a lasting impression on my youthful mind. Although since then I have been in several hard-fought battles, was surrounded by overwhelming numbers and attacked time and again by hostile Sioux and Cheyennes on the Plains, and many dear friends and companions have fallen while fighting by my side, I have never felt as I did that never-to-be-forgotten day.

By this time the Indians had all crossed the river, driving the mules with them. They stopped on the opposite bank, shaking the scalps of the teamsters at us. The captured woman was placed where we could plainly see every insult. She was stripped stark naked and forced to walk or run to keep up. She was kept with the Sioux until the following spring; then, through a half-breed who bought her, was freed and sent back to her relatives in Maine.

The other woman remained at Fort Kearney and was returned to the States completely demented. She died some six months later.

I thought at the time that the officer commanding was afraid to follow the Indians across the river and told him as much. He became very angry and threatened to place me under arrest if he heard anything more.

The Indians were never in any fear of soldiers. They would rather attack fifty soldiers than five hunters or trappers.

Our train arrived at Atchison in due time. The settlers between Kearney and the Missouri River were much frightened on hearing of the outbreak and were congregating in sufficient force to resist any attack from small marauding bands. Many houses and farms were deserted, some families leaving their stock and household effects behind. After our arrival at Atchison most of the men were not anxious for another trip. However, myself and seven others started the following week on our second trip which proved to be a very disastrous one.

The above is every word true. Only the prairie remains a silent witness to the awful tragedy.

Green River Shindig

(Continued from page 37)

BRIGHT and early next morning, Kit presented himself at Running Around's tepee to ask for Waa-nibe in marriage. The old chief sat before his fire inscrutably smoking his pipe while young Carson pressed his case. "I can give your daughter fine clothes and a good lodge. I will pay two good horses for her, a gun, and ammunition. What do you say?"

Running Around grunted. "I do not say, white man. Waa-nibe has older brother, Short Man. He fine warrior—*he* say."

"Where is Short Man?" demanded Kit.

The old man shrugged. "Here—there—everywhere. Ask the prairie wind, white man."

Kit knew that Running Around was making fun of him, but he knew he must not get angry or all would be lost. "When will Short Man be back?" he asked evenly.

"Ai-ee," smiled Running Around. "Today—tomorrow—any time!"

Kit was discouraged. *Wagh*—lovemaking was worse than trapping beaver and saving your hair from the Blackfeet! Waa-nibe had plenty of shine, and—since last night—he knew she loved him. She would make a wonderful wife, but this old rascal of a father was too slippery for him.

The flap of the lodge door was suddenly thrown back, and Short Man strode in. Seeing a white man there, he turned to leave. Running Around raised a hand. "Wait, my son. I would talk to you."

Scowling, the young warrior sat down. He listened stony-faced while his father explained the purpose of Kit's visit.

"No!" snapped Short Man, "he cannot have her. All white men are evil, and trappers are the worst. Soon I shall take the war trail and lift a lot of white scalps."

"What has happened to make your heart so bad against white men?" asked Kit. "Was it the Soup Dance last night? Tell me, my brother."

Short Man was so angry he did not want to talk about it. Kit persisted, offering a twist of tobacco. Reluctantly Short Man accepted the gift and filled his pipe.

"It's that great red-haired beast, Bad Medicine," he said finally. "He is a dog! The other night he attempted to disrobe Waa-nibe. Only blood, much white blood, can wipe out the stain on Arapaho honor. No, I cannot consent to her going with you. All trappers are evil!"

Kit said no more. Now that he saw how the stick floated, he knew what to do. Back to the rendezvous he galloped, his blue eyes cold as ice. Upon arriving at his camp, he found that the big French-Canadian had beaten two of his men to a pulp.

"Whar is he?" he inquired calmly.

"Over yonder by the trader's tent," was the reply. "He's all likkered up and a-howlin' for blood."

Kit walked toward the trader's tent, armed only with a knife.

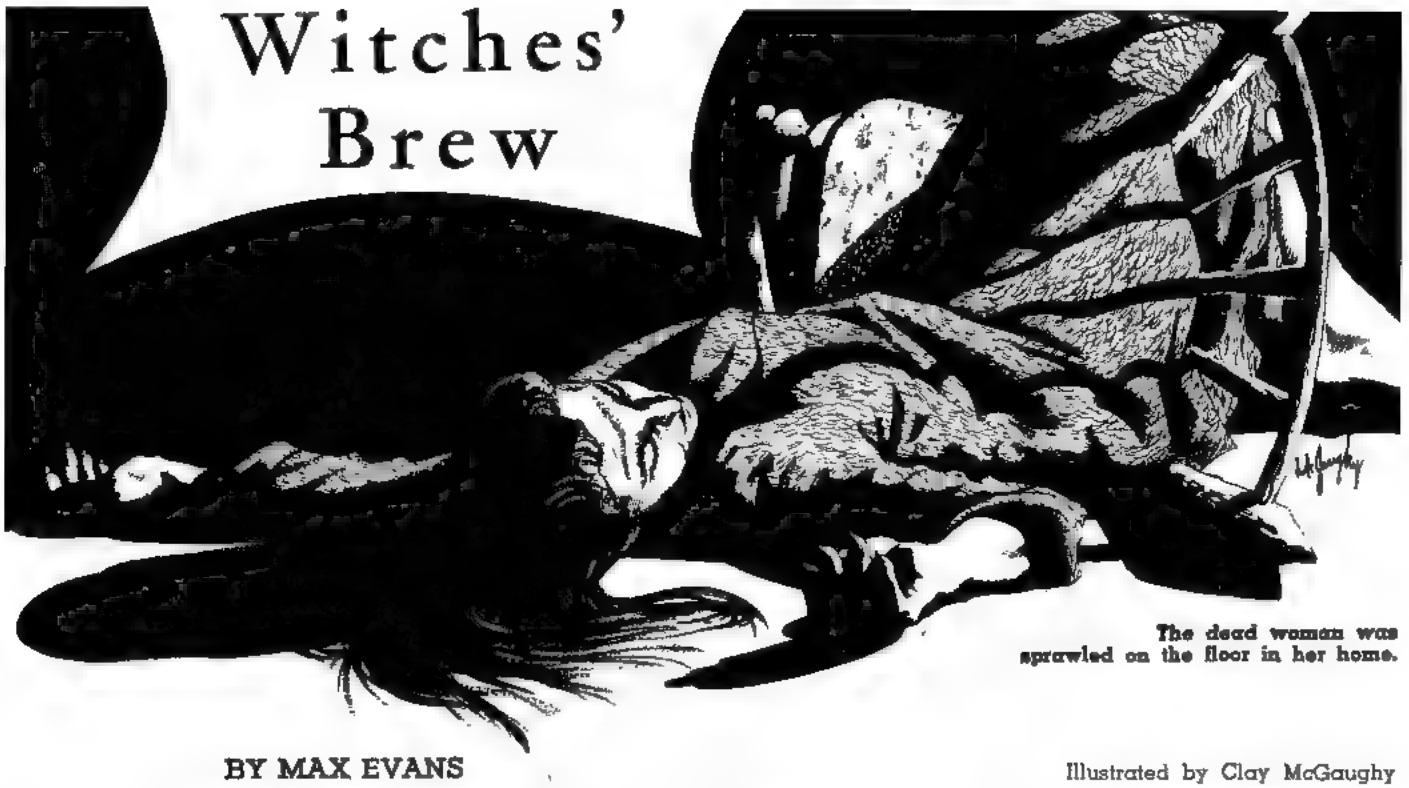
SHUNAN saw him coming and leaped into the air, flapping his arms and crowing like a rooster, "I'm a rip-roarin', head-bustin', eye-gougin', wampus cat!" he roared. "I can whip any man in ze world! Ze *Americains* are skunks, cowards, squaws. Not one of zem will fight me!"

Kit strode up to the huge Frenchman. *"I'm* an American, Shunan, and I ain't

(Continued on page 45)

Brigadier General Kit Carson. Photo courtesy Mrs. William Carson.

Witches' Brew



The dead woman was sprawled on the floor in her home.

BY MAX EVANS

Illustrated by Clay McGaughy

IF you think witchcraft was solely a product of the dark ages, you have been misled. It is almost as widespread in the Southwestern states as dry summers. A short time back Sheriff Cal Boises was called to the small desert village of Guadalupe, some ten miles north of Phoenix, Arizona.

He found there a case of suspected murder that had weird aspects. The dead woman, Mrs. Maria Estrella Miranda, was sprawled over a chair in her home. Fatal bullet holes were in her neck and arm. The investigators decided that it was a case of revenge murder after they found that diamond rings on the victim's fingers hadn't been touched and that her watch dog had been poisoned the night before.

The first inkling of a motive was discovered in the woman's house. Scattered about were a number of pictures of persons that Mrs. Miranda's husband, Antonio, could not identify. When villagers were questioned they said that the woman, of Yaqui Indian descent, practiced witchcraft and that by certain rituals she could bring about the sickness or death of the people in the pictures.

After investigations by the law and some publicity in the newspapers, a man was picked up who claimed he had a reason to kill the woman. He was a cattle rancher from Mesa, Arizona.

He was quoted as saying, "Sure, I killed her. She was a witch. She sprinkled powder on my wife in 1942 and she started to go blind. Doctors, healers and all the others couldn't help her. I spent a lot of money and traveled many miles trying to get her cured, but she just got worse."

The rancher, jailed without bond, claimed there had been marked improvement in his wife's eyesight since the slaying. His wife told reporters she could distinguish between light and dark for the first time since she had been struck blind.

John J. Flynn, Assistant Maricopa County Attorney, said that first degree murder charges would be filed. At this writing the results of the charges are not known.

Of course, all cases are not this serious. Some witch doctors claim to be able to heal anything from the gout to the seven year itch. The number of followers they have is not recorded, but it is known to be considerable. In fact, some are such firm believers that they refuse to be treated by medical doctors at all.

There are two kinds of witch doctors, the ones who charge a flat fee between two dollars and forty, and those who rely on *gifts*.

ONE woman, who had been ill for seven years and had been confined for a time in an El Paso, Texas, hospital, told of finally consulting a witch doctor. He dusted her nude body with a broom made of cut flowers. After that the woman claimed she was well and hearty.

Some specialize in child birth. The witch doctor smears the expectant mother all over with a mixture of eggs and onions. This is supposed to ease the pain and draw out the baby. A treatment that is popular among the faithful for hangovers or any type of nausea is to rub a hen egg on the patient's stomach, then break the egg, pour it into a saucer and place the dish back of the sick one's head. A potato split down the middle and attached to the patient's head is a sure cure for sinus trouble, according to the witch doctors. The same thing done with beans is supposed to relieve a headache instantly. That might be good advice for those who haven't recovered, as yet, from paying their income taxes.

My own most lasting observation of the practice of witchcraft came about several years ago. A friend, whom I shall call Jack, and I were preparing to go to Raton, New Mexico, on business. I noticed that Jack put a handkerchief in every pocket of his clothing. I asked if he thought he might be going to catch a cold and he answered, "No, my grandmother has a curse on me and I can't keep handkerchiefs. She knows I'm a nervous person and my hands and forehead perspire a lot. I need handkerchiefs to wipe it off, but she sees to it that I'm always losing them."

He went on to say that she had killed his step-grandfather by witchcraft and wanted to drive him insane. I was skeptical, but still after he had said that by night there wouldn't be a handkerchief left on his person, my curiosity was aroused to a high pitch.

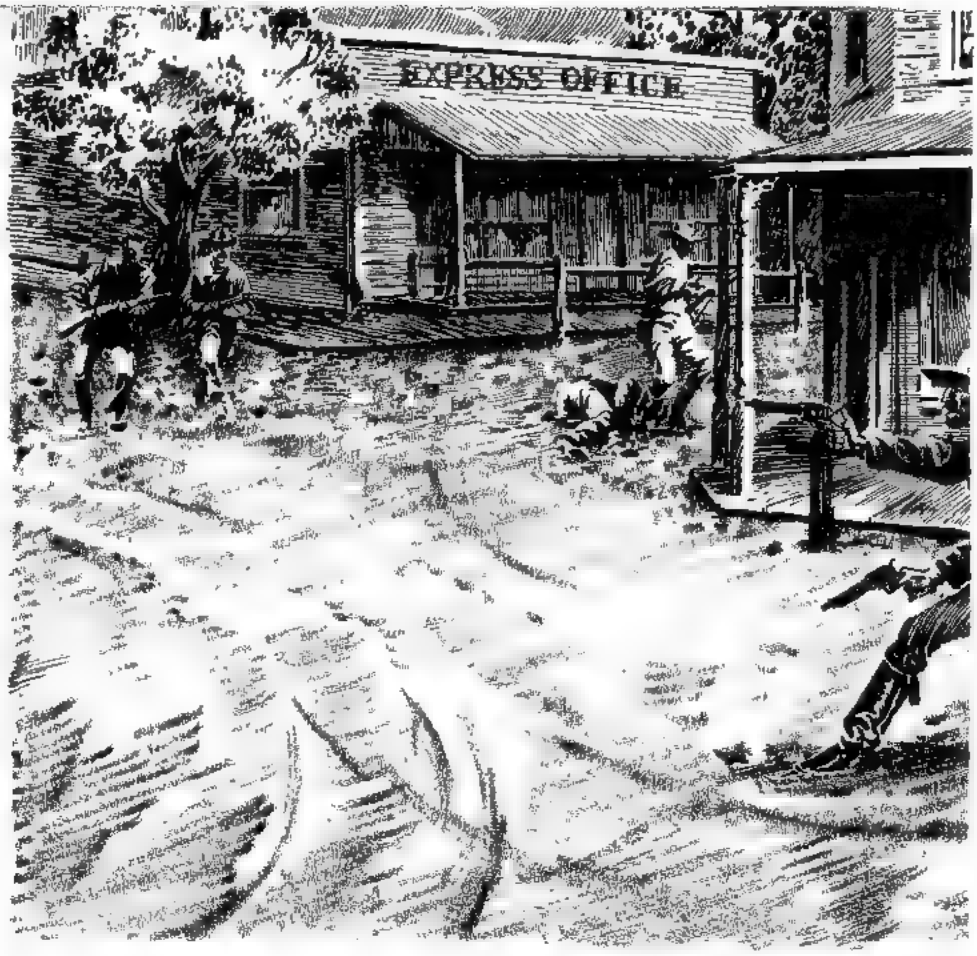
I watched every move he made. Each time he removed a handkerchief to wipe his brow, I made sure he returned it to his pocket. I even went to the bathroom with him. That night when we finished our business and retired to our hotel room I asked him about the handkerchiefs. He let me examine every stitch of his clothing and there were none to be found. Not one.

I had been with him every instant and I knew that he wasn't even an amateur magician. I offer no explanation, but that is exactly the way it was.

AS time went on, he became ill quite often. Finally, Jack consulted a witch doctor. The witch doctor advised

(Continued on page 45)

It took plenty of gun-play to get those court records from Cimarron, but the boys from Dodge City figured it was worth it



County Seat War

BY ROBERT DeARMENT

Illustrated by Al Martin Napoletano

IT was cold in the little town of Ingalls, Kansas, in the early hours of Sunday, January 12, 1889. The men who piled into the bed of a heavy dray that morning, shivered in the pre-dawn chill. Huddled under buffalo robes, they started on a six mile journey down the Arkansas River. They wore mackinaws buttoned tightly against the cold and gunbelts against anyone who might try to interfere with their strange mission. On the front of their coats were pinned brand new deputy badges, fresh out of a box from Kansas City.

The cream of gun artists from nearby Dodge City were represented in that wagon. On the seat beside Charlie Reicheldeffer, the driver, was a wiry, sharp-eyed fellow who was building a reputation as one of the greatest of the frontier lawmen—Bill Tilghman. In the wagon bed behind were such gunslinging notables as Neal Brown, a Cherokee half-breed who had learned the finer points of the art of draw-and-shoot while serving as deputy city marshal to Wyatt Earp in Dodge during the Roaring Seventies; Fred Singer and Ben Daniels, both veteran law officers and gunhands; Billy Allensworth (or Ainsworth), Ed Brooks and George Bolds, younger men who had exhibited a definite talent for pistol play; Jim and Tom Masterson, younger brothers of the famous Bat Masterson, whose exploits were legendary in Western Kansas even as early as 1889; and Newt Watson, clerk of courts of the newly organized Gray County.

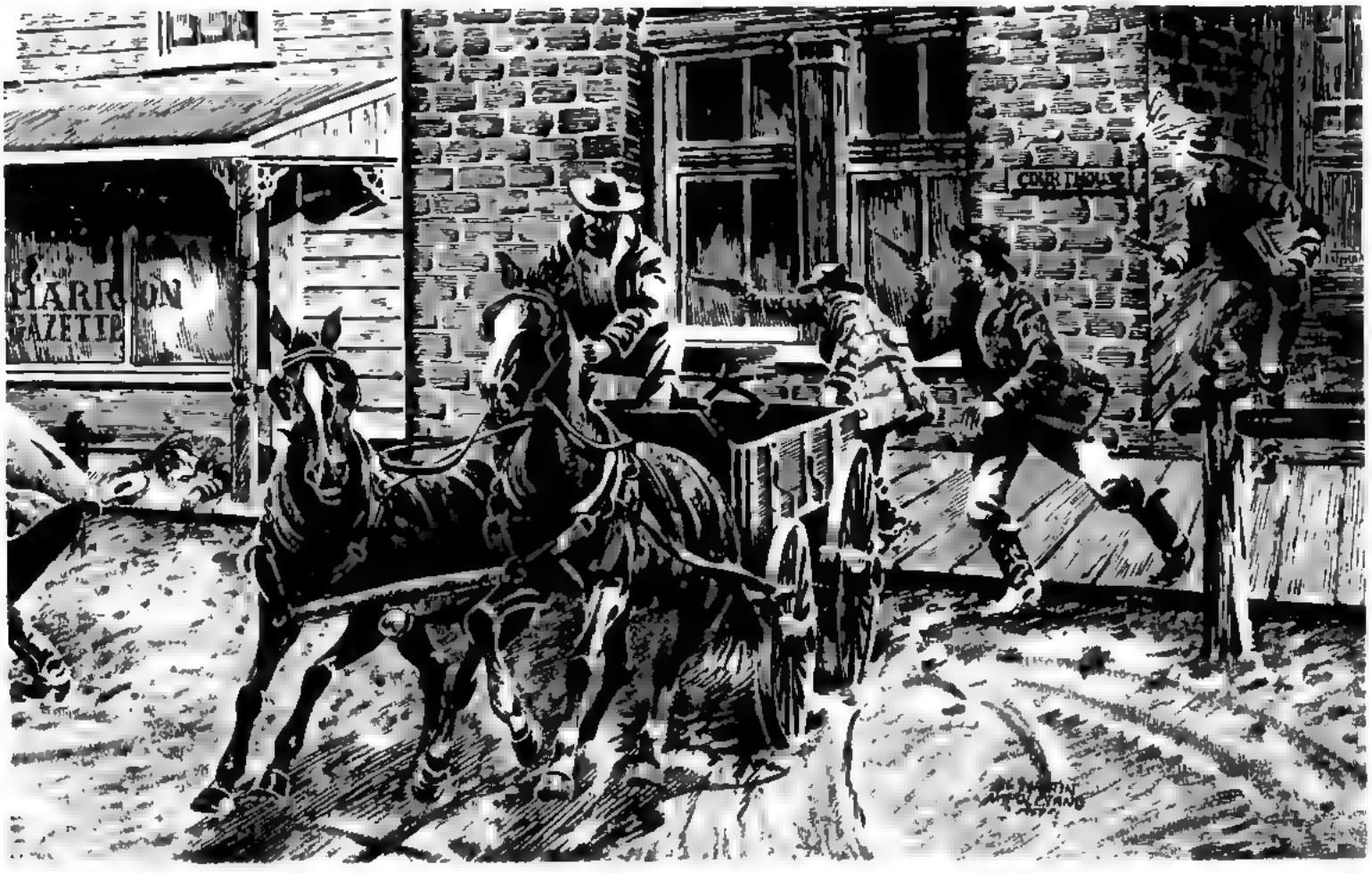
The men were quiet as the wagon creaked slowly out of Ingalls. They were thinking of the thousand dollar melon they would split when they returned from this trip. All they had to do to earn the thousand was to take the Gray County court records from the courthouse at Cimarron and deliver them to Mr. Asa T. Soule . . .

When Asa Soule came to Kansas in the middle 1880's he was already a multi-millionaire, having amassed a fortune in the East from the sale of a panacea called Hop Bitters. But Soule was energetic and imaginative, and he saw in southwestern Kansas great opportunity to become even richer. Immigrants were flooding the state. Land offices were swamped. The population of the western third of the state had increased a quarter of a million in two years. Fortunes were being made almost overnight by men of nerve and vision.

Soule had plenty of nerve. He considered himself a man of vision. He also had lots of money to back him up. The Hop Bitters King went to work. He built through Gray and Ford Counties the Eureka Irrigating Canal that was to turn the arid short grass country into a vast, green garden. When the great ditch was eighty miles long, Soule discovered that he could not get water into it. He gave up that project and turned to railroading.

He built a rail line over the fifty mile stretch from Dodge City to the village of Montezuma, only to find that nobody in Dodge wanted to go to Montezuma and the little freight that was shipped hardly paid for coal for the locomotive. Soule gave up the railroading business also, but he still was not discouraged. He looked around for a likely spot to make a million with a new county seat.

ONE of the most popular get-rich-quick schemes of Kansas in the 80's was the county seat racket. Town boomers, hoping to realize profits on their investments at the ratio of a hundred to one, bought up cheap prairie land, platted streets and lots, and resold the lots at tremendous profit. The trick was to



They broke for the wagon, snapping off shots as they run. The thin sideboards of the wagon bed afforded little protection. Splinters flew as the aroused citizens concentrated their fire on the little group of mercenaries who were trying to steal their court records.

get their town voted as county seat. They employed any means to achieve this end. Rigged elections, intimidations, even murders were committed to gain and hold the seats of county government. The result of the town boomers' greed was the phenomenon that came to be known as the Kansas County Seat Wars.

Gunhands of repute suddenly found their services in great demand when elections were held in the new counties to determine the county seat. Rival towns openly wooed notorious gunslicks to provide a show of force at the polling places. Cold-blooded killers like Charles Coulter and Ed Prather were hired by unscrupulous promoters to cow opposition voters.

Leoti and Coronado vied for the seat of Wichita County in 1887. Their struggle reached its climax on the streets of Coronado. Three men were killed and five wounded.

The Hay Meadow Massacre of 1888 in which four men were wantonly murdered was a result of the fight between Hugoton and Woodsdale for the seat of Stevens County.

In desperation, responsible citizens sent out a call for help. They turned to Dodge City, the fabled Frontier Babylon, where Bat Masterson, Bill Tilghman, Ben Daniels and Pat Sughrue were known to be more than a match for any hired gunslingers. These men, all former peace officers at Dodge during the cowcamp's wildest period, were employed as special deputies to maintain order at elections held in the new counties.

Bitter rivalry between Eminence and Ravanna marked a contest for the seat of Garfield County in 1887. C. J. "Buffalo" Jones, an old pioneer and prominent resident of Eminence, sent for Masterson and Tilghman. They arrived in Garfield County with an army of twenty deputies, and a peaceful election was held on November 8th. Garfield County old-timers testified later that the presence of the Dodge City six-gun corps that day was the only thing that prevented the worst gun battle in the history of the state.

The results of the bloody Wichita County contest were thrown out by the courts and a second election was scheduled in Leoti. Tilghman, Masterson, and Pat Sughrue were on hand to hold things level. Ed Prather appeared to stir up trouble, but he made the mistake of drawing on Bill Tilghman. It was a fatal mistake. Prather was buried shortly after the election ballots were counted.

WHEN Gray County, just west of Dodge City, was chartered, Asa T. Soule, the Hop Bitters King, organized the town of Ingalls on the Arkansas River. Cimarron, six miles down river, contended for the coveted prize as county seat. An election was held in October, 1887. Masterson, Tilghman, Ben Daniels, and several other Dodge City fighting men attended. Cimarron won the election, but Asa Soule, charging fraud, obtained a court order preventing certification of the vote. He carried the case to the courts.

The Gray County War dragged on for more than a year with bitterness and hatred on both sides increasing as the months dragged by. Skirmishes were fought both in the courts and in the streets of the rival towns.

By January of '89, Soule had run out of patience with the interminable court proceedings and decided to take decisive action on his own initiative. He had managed to get an Ingalls partisan elected to the post of clerk of courts in the fall elections of 1888. Newt Watson was his handpicked man and would carry out Soule's orders to the letter.

Cimarron, by virtue of the disputed election of '87, had been declared temporary county seat and held the Gray County court records. With those records, the symbols of county sovereignty, in his possession, Soule reasoned he could establish a courthouse at Ingalls and claim the town as the county seat. Cimarron could fight its battle through the courts as long as it wanted. Meanwhile Ingalls would boom and the Hop Bitters King would cash in big.

When "Buffalo Joe" Reynolds, Gray County sheriff and a Cimarron sympathizer, was wounded in a gunfight with rustlers, Soule saw his opportunity. He had Newt Watson name Bill Tilghman temporary sheriff. Tilghman was instructed to deputize the biggest names in Dodge's six-shooter fraternity to help him do a job of work. Soule wanted those records and he was willing to pay one thousand dollars to get them. He wished to avoid gunplay and unfavorable publicity if possible, but if trouble developed, he wanted case-hardened fighters on hand to carry through on the job. He chose an early Sunday morning for his strike . . .

The streets of Cimarron, bathed in brilliant sunlight, were deserted when Charlie Reicheldeffer wheeled his wagon into town. As Soule had anticipated, the Cimarron gentry were sleeping off the after effects of a boisterous Saturday night. The wagon halted in front of a two-story brick building that the town

Frontier Pix

A group of Dodge City, Kansas, gunfighters, from an old photograph taken in Kansas City in 1871. Reading from left to right they are: Top row: W. H. Harris, Luke Short, Bat Masterson; Sitting: C. Bassett, Wyatt Earp, McNeal, and Neal Brown.

used as a courthouse and disgorged its cargo of gunfighters.

NEAL BROWN and Jim and Tom Masterson forced their way into the building, climbed the stairs to the second floor where the records and official seal were kept, and began loading up. Below, their fellow deputies were strung out along the street, standing guard.

A great deal in the way of legal business had taken place in Gray County during its short existence and there were many volumes of records. Brown and the Mastersons had to make several trips up and down the stairs. They were just emerging from the building, arms loaded with documents, when a Cimarron insomniac turned the corner and stared at them in wonder. Calmly placing their burdens in the bed of the wagon, the looters went back inside for more.

The Cimarron early riser blinked at the row of Dodge City hard-cases lounging along the street. Comprehension suddenly swept over him. "They're stealing the court records!" he yelped, and scooted back around the corner.

Soon the town was in a turmoil as this Western style Paul Revere sprinted through the streets, shouting his warning. The citizens of Cimarron answered the call in nightshirts and underwear. Winchesters, Sharps buffalo guns and Frontier Colts were snatched up and immediately put into action. A hail of lead from doorways and windows poured into the army of the Hops Bitters Magnate. Half-dressed sharpshooters, shivering with excitement and the chill of the January morning, took up positions behind water troughs and hitch racks and banged away at the invaders.

Bill Tilghman and company began to find the stations in front of the courthouse extremely hazardous. They broke for the wagon, snapping off shots as they ran. The thin sideboards of the wagon bed afforded little protection. Splinters flew as the town's embattled defenders concentrated their fire on the little group of mercenaries huddled behind the dray.

ED BROOKS dropped to the plank sidewalk, a bullet through his abdomen. George Bolds was hit in the leg, fell down, got up, and was hit again. He was dragging himself erect on his shattered legs when a bullet smashed into his head and slammed him to the ground again. Bill Tilghman dropped his smoking six-gun and clapped a hand to his leg. A Cimarron slug had torn through his calf. It was the only wound he was ever to receive in his long and eventful career as a frontier peace officer until he was killed in 1924.

"Where the hell are the Mastersons?" shouted Fred Singer as he reloaded.

"Look!" Newt Watson jabbed a finger at the second story windows of the courthouse. The Masterson brothers and Neal Brown had interrupted their looting to join in the battle. Smoke poured from the windows as they blasted away.

"We can't wait for them," Tilghman yelled. "If we don't haul our freight, none of us will get out of this!"

At that instant came a turn in the battle which hastened the withdrawal of the outer courthouse guard. Charlie Reicheldeffer, fighting the reins, had been sitting fully exposed on the seat throughout the early moments of the battle. Suddenly a rifle bullet tumbled him backward into the wagon bed and the frightened, plunging team jerked the dray down the street toward the river. The invaders were left without cover of any kind. They began to work down the street after the wagon, firing blindly at their tormentors. George Bolds hobbled along, using his Winchester for a crutch. Ed Brooks left a trail of blood on the

(Continued on page 50)

Left: Bill Tilghman, U. S. Marshal. Center: Asa Titus Soule, the Hop Bitters King. Right: Wyatt Earp, as he appeared in 1886.

Frontier Pix

Studio De Lari

Frontier Pix

Green River Shindig

(Continued from page 40)

skeered of you. You're a fake—a big bag of wind! Your carcass is as big as a buffalo, but your heart's no bigger than a mouse. I know what you tried to do to Waa-nibe, you stinkin' varmint. Keep your filthy paws off'n her, or I'll rip your guts out and choke you to death with 'em!"

Such fighting talk from quiet Kit Carson would have sobered the average man instantly, but not Shunan. Yet, for some reason, the hulking bully refused Kit's challenge of immediate combat. Instead, he ran to his camp, seized his rifle, mounted his horse, and rode out on the nearby prairie.

Now Shunan's courage returned; he began spewing coarse insults upon all Americans in general and Kit Carson in particular. Then he switched his diatribe, bawling out with drunken zeal the lewd details of what he planned to do to Waa-nibe that very night.

"Wagh!" growled old Parson Bill Williams. "If some galoot don't crawl that kiyote's frame mighty soon, I'll do it myself. I air an old man, but I ain't goin' to take much more. It ain't decent for any man to talk that way about a woman, even if she air a pore benighted heathen."

"Rest easy, Bill," said Kit. "I aim to clip his foul tongue right now."

Swiftly, Kit ran to his camp, grabbed a single-shot pistol, flung himself upon his buffalo runner, and galloped out on the prairie.

"Thar goes young David agin Goliath," crowed Parson Bill, "an' my beaver's on *him*. Anybody want to bet a good pack-horse agin my Nez Perce pony that Kit won't make him come?"

The bet was instantly covered.

"Bet my Hawken rifle agin another pack-horse," announced Bill.

This bet too was quickly covered. Williams grinned and wagered in rapid succession his whole outfit—traps, powder, lead, everything.

"Wal, now," remarked John Hatcher, trader for William Bent, "looks like we're goin' to have a mite of excitement. A bang-up funeral will be fust-rate. Win or lose, Parson Bill can wag his jaw over the corpse."

Shunan saw Kit coming, and rode forward to meet him. The Frenchman's bluster had evaporated; for the first time he seemed to realize that he was in for something far deadlier than a rough-and-tumble fight.

STRAIGHT up to Shunan rode Kit. When he pulled in, the shoulders of their horses were touching. "Air I the man you're talkin' about?" he softly inquired.

The muzzle of Shunan's rifle shifted. *"Sacre bleu!"* he snarled. Rifle and pistol spoke together.

Simultaneously with the report of the weapons, Kit flung himself far to one side. Parson Bill saw the movement and swore bitterly, thinking his friend had been killed. Deftly, Kit whirled his horse and raced for camp, seized another pistol, and galloped back toward Shunan. As he passed a group of watching trappers, they saw one side of his face was bloody where the Frenchman's bullet had grazed his cheek.

Shunan remained numbly where Kit had left him, one wounded arm hanging helplessly at his side. Imploringly, at young Carson's approach, he raised his hand in the peace sign. If Kit saw it he chose to ignore the sign. While he was yet some rods distant, his pistol cracked. Shunan rolled to the ground.

Kit yanked his horse to a sliding stop and sprang to earth, Green River knife in hand.

"Hold on thar, Kit!" yelled Parson Bill. "He's your meat, but it ain't natural for one white man to scalp another."

Kit let go of Shunan's hair and slid the knife back into its sheath. "Reckon you're right, Bill," he replied. "Let the dead skunk wear his fur."

Next morning, John Hatcher and the boys enjoyed the bang-up funeral given Shunan. Old Parson Bill, who had cleaned up on Kit's victory in the duel, wagged his bristled jaw for half an hour on the theme "The Wages of Sin is Death." Then they wrapped the corpse in a buffalo robe and buried him, had a few slugs of Taos Lightning by way of celebration, and called the affair a walloping success.

Kit did not attend the funeral; instead, he rode upriver to the Arapaho camp. Short Man shook hands with him, motioned him to a seat beside Waa-nibe, and joined in a smoke. Kit declared that Bad Medicine was dead, restated his love for the girl and again named the many presents he would give for her.

"Hou—hou!" grunted Running Around in approval. Short Man grinned and shook Kit's hand again, sealing the bargain. With a broad smile on his leathery old face, Running Around dropped his blanket over the pair of young lovers. That constituted the marriage ceremony.

The wedding over, Running Around went outside and fired his gun in the air to draw a crowd. When the people came, the old chief proudly displayed the five Nor'west blankets, the fine new gun, Shunan's horse, and a sleek pony; all of which his new son-in-law had given him.

Within an hour everybody at the rendezvous, red and white, knew that Kit Carson had taken a woman to keep his lodge.

Witches' Brew

(Continued from page 41)

that he acquire some personal object which had belonged to his deceased grandfather and keep it near his bed. He duly arranged to get a neck scarf that his grandfather had worn often before his death.

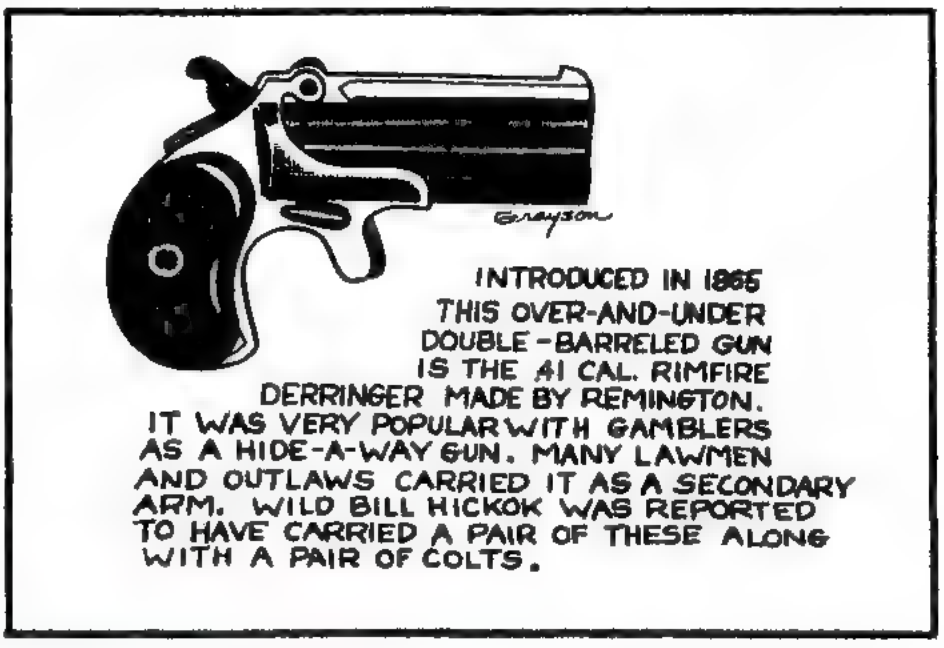
In the meantime, he told me that once when he had been working away from home, an aunt had called to tell that his mother was dying because his grandmother had already carried flowers to the church.

He rushed to the stricken woman's bedside and found that she was unable to move or speak. His aunt said that he must go curse his grandmother. That would, of course, be an unpleasant chore for anyone, grandmothers receiving the widespread respect that they do. But Jack was fearful of his mother's life. He said, "The names I called her cannot be printed; in fact, I hate to say them at all."

In two hours his mother was up and around. She prepared a nice supper of roast beef, chile beans and corn bread, for her son that night. Several people recently substantiated this story when I questioned them.

Oddly enough, two weeks after he placed the scarf by his bed, his grandmother passed away. Sewn in the lining of her coat was a small tobacco sack with an assortment of grass, weed and other plant seeds. Inside that was a ring that had belonged to Jack's sister when she was a small girl. It was cut in half and tied together with a string. The little sack was for all the world like a small stomach. The girl had suffered for years from pains in her stomach and doctors had been unable to help her. Immediately after the grandmother's death, the pains ceased for both Jack and her.

If by chance all of this has worried you about witchcraft, use some of the practicioner's own medicine. Just hang a pair of open scissors over a window. This is supposed to cut the tail off any evil spirit trying to enter. Scissors are useful to cut paper, cloth or witch doctors' advertisements out of newspapers except, like their contemporary M.D.s, witch doctors don't have to advertise—they have plenty of customers anyway.


Grayson
INTRODUCED IN 1865
THIS OVER-AND-UNDER
DOUBLE-BARRELED GUN
IS THE 41 CAL. RIMFIRE
DERRINGER MADE BY REMINGTON.
IT WAS VERY POPULAR WITH GAMBLERS
AS A HIDE-A-WAY GUN. MANY LAWMEN
AND OUTLAWS CARRIED IT AS A SECONDARY
ARM. WILD BILL HICKOK WAS REPORTED
TO HAVE CARRIED A PAIR OF THESE ALONG
WITH A PAIR OF COLTS.

REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BY J. C. TOLMAN

A fascinating Yuletide glimpse of the Old West of long ago

EDITOR'S NOTE: Surveyors have been in the van of every American frontier but relatively few of them have left written records of their work and way of life, other than field notes. The following vivid account of the experiences of a surveying party on the Texas Plains in 1887 is taken, at the suggestion of Dr. Walter Prescott Webb, from The Texaco Star, December, 1925, with the permission of The Texas Company.

SAID WATT: "Bill, I done gathered all the buffeler chips offen four sections around this here camp and I ain't goin' no further. If you cain't make out to cook two meals with this here cord of 'em, I guess we-all will go hungry."

"Umph," said Bill

"Yeah," remarked Watt, "I know this here gol-darned drizzle-drazzle done made the sap rise in the chips an' it's hard to get a het on the ovens; but it's forty miles to the nearest brush an' God knows how far to a tree, an' my back is done give out totin' chips."

"Bosh!" said Bill, as he lifted the top of a dutch-oven to take a look at the biscuits in which he took so much pride. They were always light and delectable when he could get a proper "het" on his oven.

"Lordy, Bill!" exclaimed Watt, "I never seen you make such biscuits. Them looks to me as though they had squat to rise and baked on the squat."

Bill threw a poker at him, which he neatly dodged and it nearly hit Bill's pet wildcat. Kitty spat irritably and lit on the top of the chuck-wagon, his perch in time of trouble

Presently Watt said: "I hear the line-wagon about a mile off, comin' fast."

Presently Dave and Martin rode up, unsaddled and fed their ponies. By that time the line-wagon reached camp and both of the chainmen helped Sebe unharness and feed.

Presently the Major ambled up on "Old Sideways," the hip-shot cayuse provided by a rich corporation for this particular topographer. The surveying party was complete and hungry, as usual.

Bill pounded a three-foot iron pipe with a poker and eight members of a pioneer surveying party gathered around a table made of two boards and situated near the N.W. corner of Block No. 7, I. G. N. R.R. Co. Survey, in the Panhandle of Texas, the time being late in the year 1887.

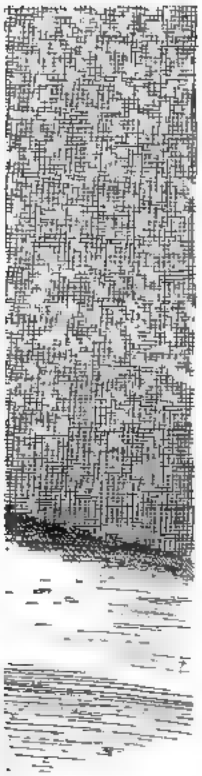
That was only seventy years ago; just the allotted Biblical span of a man's life, a brief flicker of time hardly to be considered in the life of a nation. But consider:

IN 1887, between No-Man's Land on the north, the Palo Duro on the south, the Indian Territory on the east, and New Mexico on the west, there were just thirty-six houses outside the town of Mobeetie, Fort Elliott, and a little settlement at Tascosa. Mobeetie was the metropolis of the area and boasted a population of three hundred and fifty humans.

There was no railroad; no graded road; no fence, except small pastures near headquarter ranch houses.

In the "breaks" and canyons one could find objects by which to guide oneself; but on the Llano Estacado there was only a grass-covered plain extending beyond the range of sight. This plain had been the home of the buffalo, and their bones, skulls, and horns could be seen in any direction. Within the next few years, the bone-hunters were to gather these and haul them many miles to be shipped by rail and made into fertilizer. The "buffalo-chip," or dried dung, was the only fuel of the plains as long as it could be found.

At the time of this sketch there were thousands of antelope and many hundreds of mustangs on the plains.



Illustrated by Wm. Loechel

The Bunch at Lunch. Left to right: Omohundro, Howard, Poynton, Morris, McCullough, Tolman. This outfit remained in the field for two years. During that time they were never in town and did not see any humans outside of their own party more than a dozen times.

"Prince Charlie" Goodnight had preserved a few buffalo on the J A Ranch on the lower Palo Duro, and few wild herds were reported on the North Plains; but all the rest of the mighty bison herds were dead. It would have been so very easy to have preserved some of them. Also our trees and birds and . . . but we are democratic, and so—

At night the men slept on blanket-rolls on the ground. There is no finer bed for the tired outdoor man. Tents were pitched whenever the weather was unpleasant, but most of the time sleep was in the open. It was a hard but healthy life.

The drizzle ceased some time in the night, and Bill had breakfast ready by daylight. He pounded on his iron pipe with his accursed poker and yelled his matin-song in a hideous voice: "Wake up, snakes! Day's a-breakin'!"

Blessed sleep! Blessings brighten as they take their flight. For many years one of that outfit has thought that old Bill might have developed a gentler method by which to dispel slumber. Well, anyhow, the outfit ceased to sleep and presently was washed and grubbed, and the stock was fed and watered and saddled or hitched; the surveying outfit loaded in the light "line-wagon" and the tents and bedrolls piled near the camp wagons—so that the camp-rustler could load them with the least trouble.

Then the line party started for the point where they had quit work the night before. This was a small mound of sod and was visible for three miles. They reached it betimes and P. G., the Chief, had his transit set and took his first sight almost before the refraction of the sun's early rays ceased to interfere.

DAVE, the front flagman, could lope his pony a half mile and take a sight and not miss the distance more than a few feet. P. G. had Sebe drive him up to the hub and dig up a chunk of sod to mark the spot. By that time P. G. would be ready for a back-sight on Martin's flag and Dave would be ready a half mile ahead. P. G. would set Dave and proceed. Martin would lope gaily up to the piece of sod—which could be seen half a mile—and find his tack-point in time for another sight.

It was lovely and easy for everybody—that is to say everybody who had an easy job. The chain-carriers, of course, had to walk every foot of the line and measure it carefully. If one of them made an error, things would blow up. Somehow the poor devils averaged over seven miles of measured line for each and every day for seven years, and didn't seem to make any appreciable error. Of course they were dull creatures, not tempermental nor given to flights of fancy.

Lines were run and marked to the north as far as the head of McClellan Creek. From a corner on this line another line was traced to the west, and corners established on the area where the town of Amarillo was afterwards started.

Lines were run to the east as far as to the line of the J A Ranch. These lines were over the plains. As far as the eye could see, the corners of sections and blocks could be observed when the atmosphere was not disturbed.

Frequently the mirage played strange tricks on the Llano Estacado. One day near the head of North Fork, we suddenly saw Al Holland driving Beck and Sue—a team of mules—apparently about half a mile away. We thought he would reach us in a few minutes, but they jogged along for half an hour and then faded away. Afterwards it was found that at the time he was nearly twenty miles away.

A few days later P. G. took the outfit to the west line of the X range to meet Mr. Gray, who was to show some corners. When we arrived at the rendezvous, we saw the two black ponies he drove, trotting along with his white canvas-topped buckboard, which we easily recognized. We waited an hour and he seemed no nearer, so we drove to meet him. At about a mile from the rendezvous his outfit very suddenly changed into a white buffalo skull with two black horns. While we stared at it, Mr. Gray suddenly appeared from nowhere in another direction and reached us in a few minutes.

One day we started to run a line south. It was a clear still day and it seemed that visibility was infinite. We could see cattle ahead for miles and there

(Continued on page 56)

TO UI
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in James Blain at left and Captain Jack Crawford
ht, as they appeared prior to the battle of 1879.

e two miners were in the worst
t of their lives. It was either

un or be scalped!

By MABEL PICKERING

IN THE summer of 1875, gold was discovered in the southeastern part of the Black Range in New Mexico—and the little boomtown of Hillsboro was born almost overnight.

This was in Apache territory, and the Indians looked upon the influx of whites as a breach of promise by the Government and a brazen invasion of their last stronghold by the gold-hungry White Eyes. Angrily they took to the warpath. Stripped and painted, they flitted along the lonely trails and through the barren draws until they spotted a prospector camp. Creeping close to their unsuspecting prey, they'd usually knife or tomahawk one white man first and then kill the other as he rushed to help his partner. Shooting was seldom resorted to, as firearms were scarce with the Apaches at that time. Later, as the war progressed, they acquired guns and became good marksmen.

At the time of the gold discovery, my father, James Blain, was living in El Paso, Texas. The gold fever hit him hard and he decided to try his hand at the game. He arrived at Hillsboro camp in the fall of that year and soon he and a friend, Dick Johnson, had staked out a claim and were all set to make a fortune. They did placer mining at first; later sank a shaft.

So far no Apaches had been sighted around Hillsboro. As the days passed, the miners became more careless. Perhaps the Indians would have continued to ignore this small group of men had not the government decided to move the Apaches to another location. Accordingly, the Army attempted to transfer the disgruntled red men from the Black Range to the San Carlos Reservation in Arizona. The Indians refused to leave their home country and broke for the San Mateo Mountains. For a time, things proceeded peacefully.

During this tense period, Captain Hooker was in charge of the Ojo Caliente (Warm Springs) trading post. The Captain commanded Company E of the Ninth Cavalry, composed of about seventy-five Negro soldiers led by white officers. Counting packers and scouts, Company E numbered about one hundred men.

Knowing that the Apaches had repeatedly refused to come in for a parley, Captain Hooker was constantly on the alert for an attack. A foresighted officer, Hooker trained his horses—when grazing—to rush for the corrals at the sound of a shot. One afternoon the Captain's fears materialized. Apaches crept up on his herders and killed them. When the well-trained horses started to stampede for the corrals, the Indians cleverly turned them into the hills.

There are many versions of the beginning of the Apache wars. My father was sure that he took part in the first battle.

On September 11, 1879, the small placer mining camp of Hillsboro was attacked by the Indians. Nobody had figured that the Apaches would strike that far north, so no guards had been put out. The miners had gone to work unarmed, leaving their guns in the large cabin where they all lived. Two men were killed in the rush to the house. Once inside, the others armed themselves and held the attackers off.

Further along the hill, my father and his friend Dick were working their shaft, unaware of the shooting a scant mile away. Dick was tamping in sticks of powder, preparing the last blast of the

day's work. He was noted for using a short fuse, so my father Jim lost no time in climbing the ladder.

THE sight that met his eyes when he reached the surface was enough to make him forget the danger below. There, in a semicircle, astride Captain Hooker's horses, were fifty or more Apaches! The warriors were naked except for breechclouts and moccasins, their bodies glistening in the lowering sun and their faces so hideously painted as to scare the living daylights out of Jim. He took the quickest way back into the shaft; he simply let go the ladder and fell.

Dick hurriedly snuffed out the fuse and bawled, "What the hell's the matter with you? You gone loco?"

Hurriedly Jim told him of their predicament, and they sat down to try to figure a way out. Their guns were at the cabin, so they decided to bluff their way through. My father picked up a short-handled shovel and stuck it under his coat, leaving just a little of the handle protruding. He hoped that the hostiles might think it a gun until they could get close to the cabin and be covered by the rifles of their fellow miners. Not much of a chance, but the only one they had.

Jim preceded Dick up the ladder, and stood menacing the Apaches with the improvised "gun." The subterfuge didn't work; the warriors whooped with laughter at this feeble trick of the White Eyes. As Jim and Dick began to back away, the grinning Apaches moved with them. Each time Jim threatened them with that silly shovel handle, they whooped again in savage amusement.

My father could hear Dick stumbling backward and swearing under his breath, "Why don't the so-and-so's shoot us and get it over with?"

Presently the Apaches tired of the sport and began to move in faster. "Start running, Dick!" yelled Jim. "I don't want anything in my road when I start traveling!" Dick took off like an antelope.

Giving Dick a chance to get a good head start, Jim jabbed the shovel at the oncoming Apaches once more; then threw it down and ran. By this time, Dick was nearly a hundred yards in the lead.

Only one shot was fired by the Indians as they raced for the cabin, probably fired into the air to spur them on to still greater speed.

Dick had always boasted of his prowess as a runner and had often challenged Jim to a race. He had his chance that day, as the men in the cabin witnessed the strangest and most exciting foot race they had ever seen; two men running for their lives. Afterward, they told of their amazement at Dick's fleetness, as with never a stumble he sped over the uneven ground as though it were a dance floor. They solemnly swore that Jim never touched ground after the first take-off, but simply flew past Dick to be acclaimed the winner. "And you know," my father would reminisce, "I never felt the ground either!"

No one will ever know for certain why the Apaches let their two helpless victims escape, but probably it was more entertaining to watch the desperate race than to kill the racers. Afterward, they got down to business and attacked the cabin. The siege continued for several hours until the miners were rescued by

Above: living quarters were mostly makeshift during days of the Hillsboro gold strike. Here, an itinerant smithy shoes a miner's horse. Below: Percha City, about eight miles from Hillsboro, was outpost for military assigned to keep peace between western White-Eyes and Apaches.

Three soldiers and a civilian take it easy between Indian campaigns. Scout Blain was hired by Army for each uprising discharged in quiet times.

Major Murrow and 600 Negro soldiers, who were trying to catch up with Geronimo's band.

During the bloody war that raged for the next six years, my father was employed as a citizen scout by Major Murrow. He also served under General Buell as a courier. His services were seldom required for more than a month a time, as after each campaign he would be dismissed and later recalled when needed. He also served as scout for Captain Jack Crawford, who succeeded Wild Bill Hickok as chief of government scouts in New Mexico and Texas.

Like many of the old-time scouts, my father had little use for the Apaches; in fact, Chief Victorio was the only Apache for whom he had a kind word. He said the old warrior was a fighter all the way through and as game as his fellow tribesmen were treacherous. Victorio was killed like a warrior, facing the enemy and defiant to the end.

In 1880, my father was chosen captain of Company E, First Regiment of New Mexico Mounted Infantry. In 1885 he was appointed Captain of Company A, of the Third Regiment of Mounted Infantry; being commissioned major a few months later. These appointments were in the New Mexico Militia, not the regular Army.

In 1924, the Major received his first pension check, in recognition of services as an Indian scout. He cherished it as a tangible token that the lonely nights on dim trails, the dangerous scouting in unknown territory against deadly hostiles, were not all in vain.

County Seat War

(Continued from page 44)

sidewalk as his comrades dragged him, unconscious, from the courthouse.

Ironically, it was Asa Soule's waterless Eureka Canal which saved the retreating Ingalls army. The banks of that former Soule fiasco cut the edge of town near the courthouse, and the Ingalls Irregulars floundered into the dusty ditch before the guns of the aroused Cimarron citizenry cut them to pieces.

Reichelderffer had meanwhile recovered control of his stampeding horses. Although weak and shaken from shock and loss of blood, he managed to bring the wagon to the canal where the Dodge gunmen were beleaguered. All struggled aboard and Fred Singer, taking the reins from the fainting driver, lashed the team into a gallop.

Cimarron horsemen pressed the retreating army and Tilghman, Watson, and Allensworth piled county ledgers at the rear of the wagon as improvised bulwarks. Bullets thudded into the heavy legal volumes until the careening dray reached the outskirts of Ingalls. There the Cimarron men gave up the chase.

Asa T. Soule had his court records, a little war-scarred and blood-spattered perhaps, but almost intact. Meanwhile, however, three of his mercenaries were still carrying on his war back in Cimarron.

WHEN the wagon pulled out and left them stranded on the second floor of the courthouse, Neal Brown and the Masterson brothers settled down for a siege. All had been through many rough spots before and displayed no panic in the face of their predicament. They had a well-fortified position, two smoothly operating six-guns apiece, and plenty of ammunition in their cartridge belts. They were prepared to hold off the irate citizens of Cimarron for some time. All three were professional gamblers and with the traditional stoic calm of gamblers they waited for a break in their favor.

They knew that they could not surrender to the Cimarron townspeople just then. The local residents were wrought up enough to hold a lynching. Who could blame them? The court records, the symbols of the county government that they so coveted, had been stolen right out from under their noses. Moreover, the gunfire of the Ingalls raiders had not been without effect. The besieged gunmen had seen several defenders go down. They did not know it yet, but J. W. "Will" English, one of Cimarron's most popular citizens, lay dead. Ed Fairhurst and Jack Bliss were severely wounded and Asa Harrington had a thumb shot off. Another defender, taking off his hat after the gun battle, had found a bullet hole through the crown and a clipped lock of hair inside.

All day long Brown and the Mastersons kept possession of the courthouse. Once a group of brave souls tried to rush them; they got only as far as the stairway before a fusillade of shots from the second floor drove them back. Later a ladder was run up to a rear window but Jim Masterson simply kicked it away. Infuriated, the Cimarron men downstairs blasted away blindly through the ceiling, riddling the second floor. Brown and the Mastersons hopped nimbly to the top of the big county safe and waited out the barrage.

None of the two hundred armed and angry men surrounding the building seemed able to devise a method of dislodging the Dodge City gunfighters. A long night followed in which both sides kept a tense vigil.

In the first light of a new morning, Jake Shoup, a Cimarron spokesman, stepped out into the street with a white flag of truce. "Masterson," he called, "I want to talk."

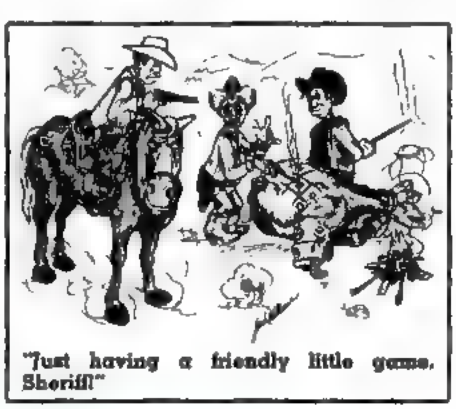
"Make your talk," Jim Masterson shouted back. "We're listening."

Shoup said that if the three would come down peaceably they would be escorted to the train for Ingalls.

"We ain't giving up our guns," Jim warned.

Shoup shrugged. "You can keep them. We just want you to clear out."

AFTER a council of war the Dodge City men decided to accept the offer. They emerged warily from their fortress, six-guns in their hands, eyes alert for the first sign of treachery. An escort of grim-faced men fell in behind them as they walked to the Santa Fe depot. The warriors of both factions stood tense and silent while they awaited the arrival of the west-bound train. Finally it pulled in and the Dodge City gunmen stepped aboard under the malevolent gaze of the Cimarron guards.



"Just having a friendly little game, Sheriff!"

Neal Brown and the Masterson brothers had undoubtedly been greatly surprised by the unexpected generosity of the Cimarron townsmen in allowing them to leave. They later learned the reason for that apparent gesture of magnanimity. Bat Masterson, who in 1889 was running the Palace Theatre and Gambling Parlors in Denver, had gotten the story of the Battle of Cimarron over the press wire from the *Kansas City Star*. He had immediately dispatched a telegram to Jake Shoup in Cimarron to the effect that if his brothers were not permitted to leave the town unharmed, he would personally hire a train and come in from Colorado with enough gunslingers to wipe Cimarron off the map of Kansas. The people of southwest Kansas in the 1880's knew Bat Masterson and knew he meant what he said. His brothers were allowed to go.

That same day the governor of Kansas dispatched a contingent of state militia to maintain order in Gray County and, although hatred and bitterness between the citizens of the rival towns was undiminished, there was no further bloodshed.

The *New York Tribune* made editorial note of the Battle of Cimarron:

"The news that another county seat war has broken out in Kansas has found its way to New York by telegraph. Kansas is again in the saddle. Once more the four mule team is attached to one of the courthouses and is going across the prairie at a fast trot.

"The existence of the western Kansas courthouse is at best transitory and uncertain. The golden morning sunlight floods it in Pottawatomie City, but its lengthening evening shadow falls across the streets of Little Paradise Valley. One day the stray swine of Occidental City seek its hospitable shade; the next, some predatory calf in Big Stranger butts open the back door and eats a deed and two mortgages while the registrar is taking a nap. Today we mark it in Grand Junction with a new front door painted yellow, and the gable end blown off by the last tornado, but tonight a band of determined men will come from Rattlesnake Crossing and haul it away with a yoke of oxen, with the mayor and city council of Rattlesnake pushing on the end of the courthouse. The Kansas court house is the Wandering Jew among public institutions."

But the last of the bloody Kansas county seat wars was over. Mr. Hops Bitters Soule had his court records and Ingalls its county seat. Six months later tempers had cooled sufficiently for a trial to be held in the matter of the death of J. W. English. On June 10, 1889, Newt Watson, Fred Singer, Billy Allensworth, Ben Daniels, Neal Brown, and Jim Masterson stood trial for the murder of English and were acquitted. In 1893, another election was held to determine the rightful county seat, and Cimarron was returned the undisputed winner.

By that time, however, the people of western Kansas had learned that a town did not grow and prosper merely because it held the seat of county government. No one cared much, therefore, when the records were moved from Ingalls back to Cimarron again.

Z ORG
TION PROHIBITED

Illustrated by
Al Martin Napoletano

The days of the trail drives on the Western plains are over. Yet many an old-timer still recalls the awesome sight of

LIGHTNING ON THE PLAINS

BY MAYANNE McCARLEY

HEAVENLY fireworks traced by brilliant, jagged spears of summer lightning over stormy skies are always a fearful and fascinating sight. One can view such lightning with some degree of calmness from the shelter of a doorway in a substantial dwelling, but to have been out on the vast, barren spaces of the Western plains in such a storm with five or six thousand longhorn cattle must have been akin to a night of terror, with the awful feeling of having no place to hide.

The men who drove cattle north over the old Chisholm Trail knew about it. These old-timers described lightning on the plains in unforgettable terms.

One trail driver tells of lightning coming first in "just a few bats," then hitting like fury. At first there was flash lightning; then it quickly became forked lightning, jabbing at the earth with fierce, dagger-like thrusts. As the storm intensified, chain lightning made it seem as if the whole world was aflame, and then followed what was described as "blue" lightning. But the most horrible of all forms to the men on the trail was ball lightning rolling along the ground. He describes what he calls "spark" lightning, which seemed to settle down on everything like a fog. A smell like burning sulphur polluted the air. It was almost suffocating. Phosphorescence, or foxfire, stood out in lines of dancing white fire on the long horns of the cattle and the ears of the horses. It was like a supernatural finger etching lines of light. The men, too, were outlined eerily in the weird glow, the brims of their hats seemingly on fire. The air grew so hot and heavy it was difficult to breathe. Other old-timers, describing such a night, declared they had never seen anything like it on this earth. In the words of another trail driver: "Lightning seemed to settle on the ground and creep along like something alive."

Lightning on the plains was not only terrifying to look at, it was deadly. When the big herds were moving North, it was not uncommon to lose four or five steers in one night from a herd, plus several horses out of the remuda—all struck dead by lightning.

Sometimes lightning, finding nothing else to strike, would hit the earth and leave great gouged-out holes scarring the hillsides and prairies.

MEN, too, were often killed by lightning while riding the old cattle trails. It was one of the hazards of being a cowhand with the big herds. In 1882, Gus Johnson, well-known Texan and part owner of the herd he was helping to drive north across Oklahoma, was killed by lightning. It set his shirt afire, tore his hat to pieces, and melted the diamond-studded gold pin he was wearing. G. B. Withers, riding with him, lost one eye by the same stroke of lightning, but another rider nearby was uninjured.

Although it must have been a terrifying experience to be in the middle of one of these brilliant lightning and thunderstorms on the plains, the trail hands usually did not have time to think much about it, for a big herd always drifts before a storm and if a lead steer was hit by lightning or the cattle frightened by the storm, they would surely stampede. So there was little time to think of the electricity exploding in brilliant charges and the sharp, detonating crashes of thunder.

Hail, bullet-like and wind-driven, was often a part of such storms. Those who watch hail rolling on the lawn as they view it from the safety of their windows can little imagine the brutal effect it has beating down on the unprotected shoulders and heads of creatures out in the storm. Men and animals suffer equally. *(Continued on page 58)*

Fireman Frank Barnes

* (Readers, don't forget—this story was written twenty years ago!)

*** Sixty years have passed since the spectacular "Crash at Crush, Texas," yet here—for the first time—is the TRUE story of the great Texas**

Train Wreck

BY FRANK BARNES

Photographs by Deane

IN the spring of 1896, William G. Crush—later general passenger agent for the M.K.T. Railroad—was on a trip from New York to St. Louis when the engine exploded and wrecked the train.

Crush saw the big crowd that gathered, and asked himself: "If all these people will come to see a train wreck *after* it has happened, would not thousands more come to see a real wreck well advertised in advance?"

Crush was quite a showman, and he determined to put his idea across. He went to the top officials of the M.K.T. line and asked permission to stage a carefully planned head-on collision.

Depression stalked the country in 1896, so Crush's clinching argument was that the road would make money on the crash. "We'll hit headlines in newspapers all over the United States!" he assured his superiors. "Fifty thousand people will come to see the wreck, and the Katy will haul every one of 'em!"

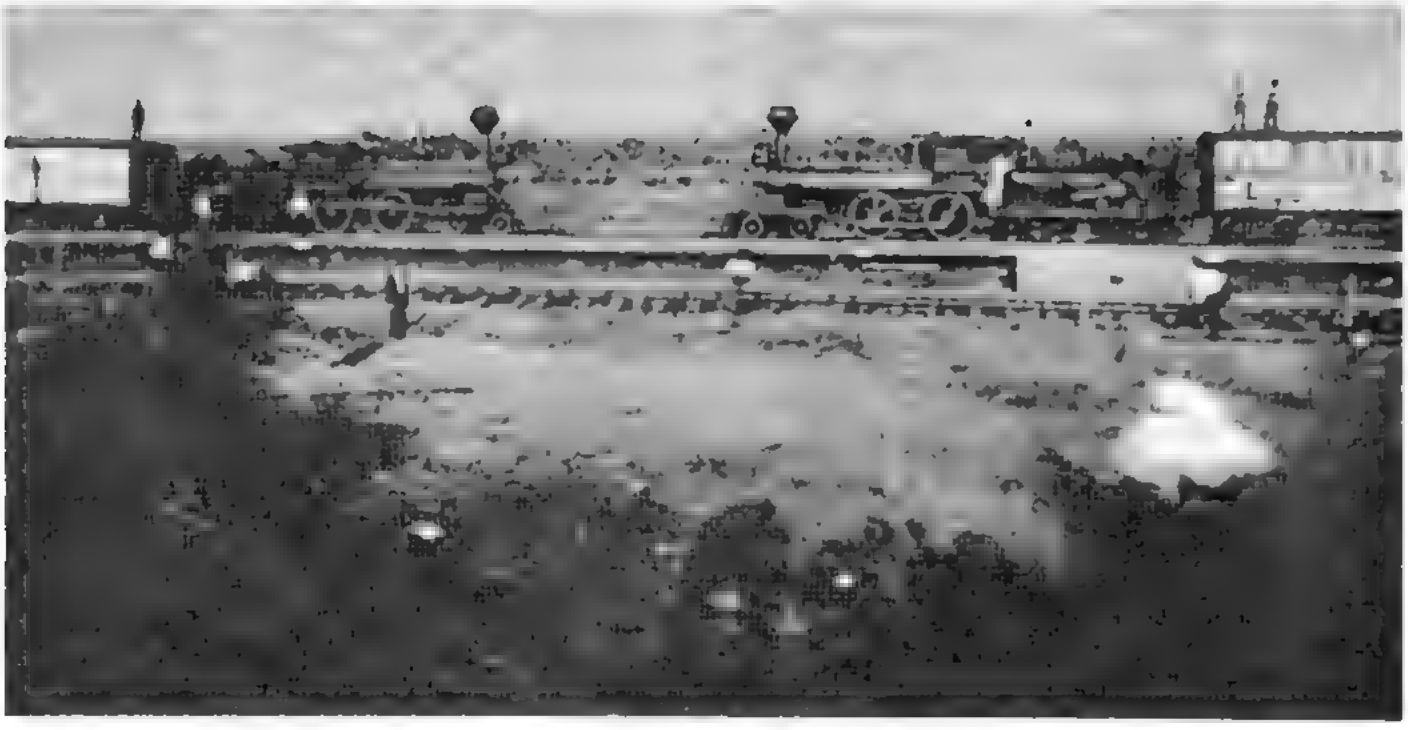
As Crush had promised, the startling announcement that two trains moving at high speed would collide head-on made headlines in newspapers all over the country, even though the time and place were to be announced later.

After extensive planning the date was set for September 15, 1896, and the place sixteen miles north of Waco, named Crush for the occasion. A large pasture was rented, mostly on the west side of the Katy mainline and sloping toward it. This slope would give the spectators an excellent view of the proceedings, particularly as the afternoon sun would be at their backs.

The pasture was cleaned like a picnic ground. Platforms were built for the convenience of the passengers who would arrive on the excursion trains. Crush secured a huge tent from the Ringling Brothers' Circus for use in serving meals to the crowd. Smaller tents were erected for dispensing liquid refreshments. A stand was built for the official photographers who made the photographs which illustrate this article.

On the day of the wreck, several water cars were brought from Waco, filled with ice and artesian water, to provide free drinking water for the spectators. Tin cups, fastened with chains to the taps on the tanks, insured drinking facilities for all.

Part of the crowd from photographers' stand. The rope set to hold back the crowd (which they ignored) is shown at left of scene.



We brought the trains to the point of collision and stopped when this picture was made. Then we backed up to await the signal for the final run.

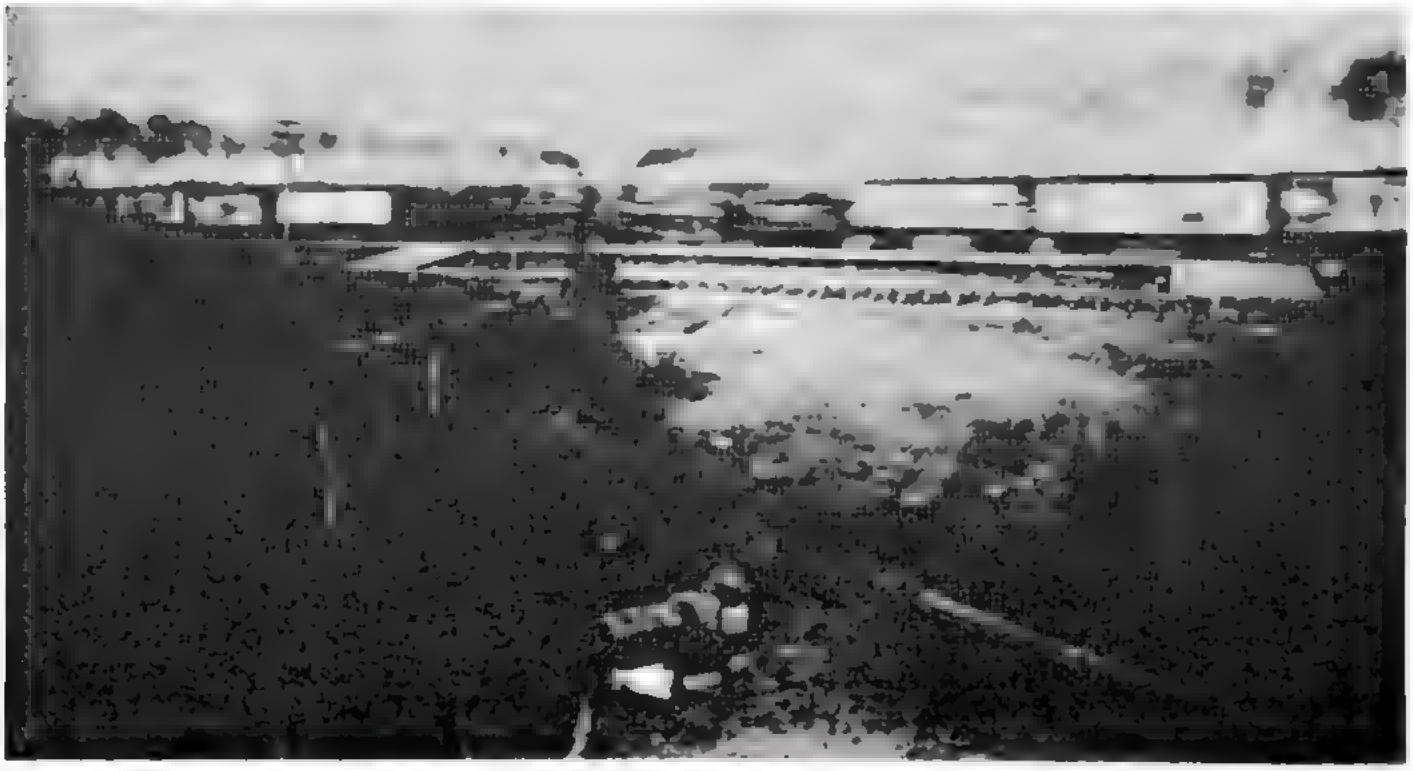
PREPARATIONS were speeded up as September 15 drew near. In the railroad shops at Denison, Texas, two 35 ton engines were readied for the collision. (60 ton engines were replacing the smaller engines, so the 35 ton jobs were surplus. The big wreck was simply a more spectacular way of disposing of junk engines than our present methods.)

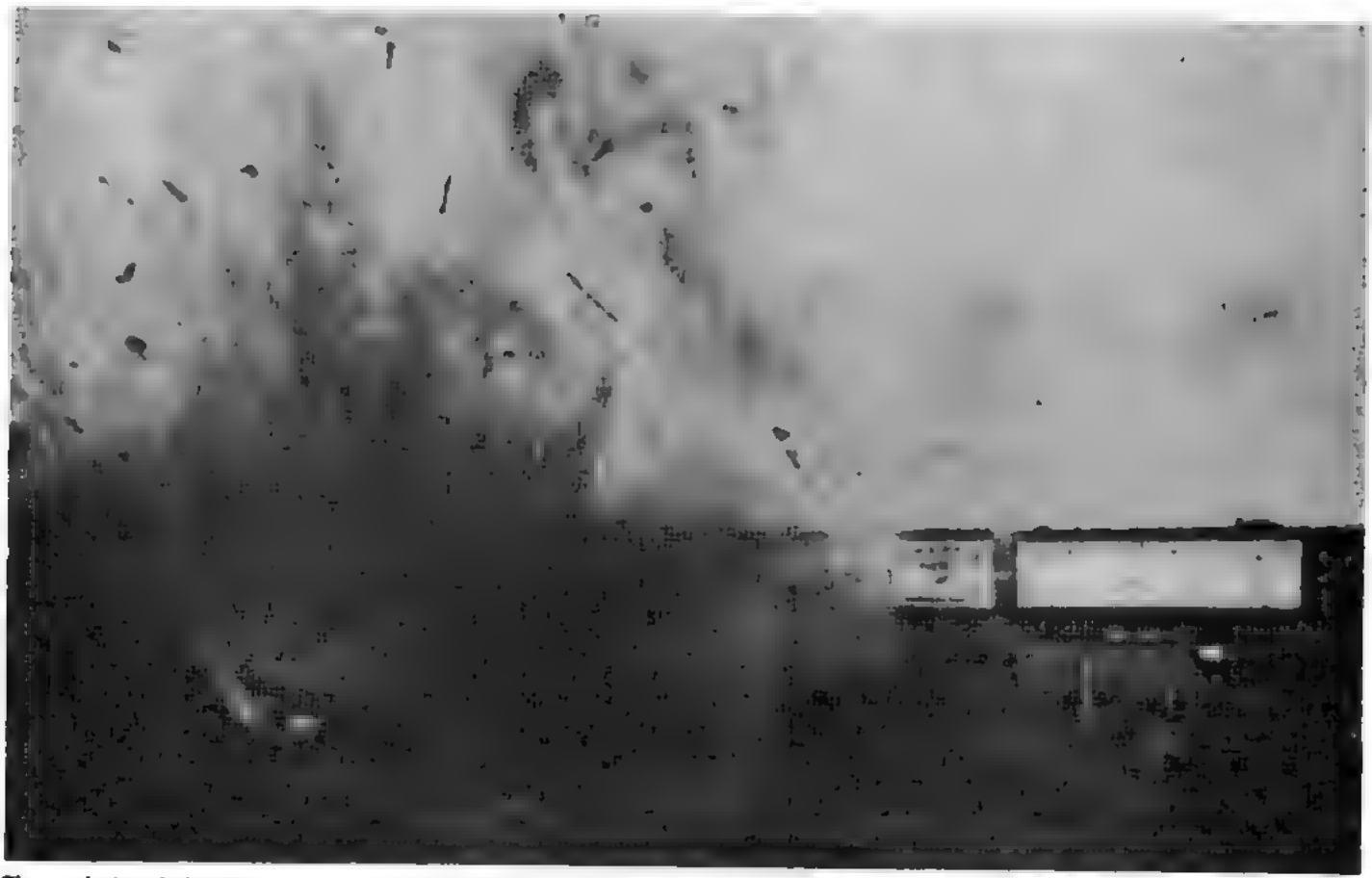
One engine was painted bright green, trimmed in red, and numbered 999. The other was painted red, trimmed in green, and numbered 1001. For each engine a train of six empty stock cars was made up. The cars were covered with canvas, painted to advertise the Dallas Fair and the Ringling Brothers' Circus.

The week before the date of collision, engine crews were sent from Smithville to Denison. Engineer Charles Cain and Fireman S. M. Dickerson brought Number 1001 and its train to Waco via Dallas. Engineer C. E. Stanton and Fireman Frank Barnes (myself) brought Number 999 through Fort Worth to Waco. This trip, with stops en route, was good publicity for the big show to come.

The plan was to have the trains start two miles apart, attain a speed of a mile a minute, and collide at a point midway of the run and directly in front of the natural amphitheater where the crowd would gather. With the trains moving at this speed, 88 feet per second, even a small error in timing

A fully-exposed negative shows the engines striking. Moving trains are badly blurred by length of the exposure.





The explosion. Indications are that the boiler exploded after the trains had collided and the cars had stacked up. The cars shown in this photograph have moved three-car-lengths after the engines collided.

would move the point of collision enough to spoil the view of the photographers; so precise calculation was imperative if the widely advertised show was to be a success.

For three days before the wreck we made practice runs, timing each engine to travel the mile run in two minutes. The two engines didn't perform just alike, so proper adjustments had to be made.

On each engine a clamp was placed, against which the throttle could be opened. In this way, the same throttle setting could be used each time. Engineer Stanton, on Number 999, opened the throttle to the clamp with the reverse lever in low and counted sixteen exhausts, which was four turns of the drivers. He then set the reverse lever next to high, and we made our mile in two minutes from a standing start.

The crew of 1001 learned how to set their controls for the same timing. Of course, on the final run each crew would start the engines and get off quickly.

OTHER details were handled with equal care. On the link-and-pin couplers that we had, the pins sometimes jumped out and that broke the train as the cars uncoupled. Each of the pins was drilled and a key fitted, so this could not happen.

The steam line to the air pump was disconnected, so the airbrakes could not be set by some mishap such as an air hose breaking between the engine and the tank.

On the day of the crash, our trains were run into position and the track cut behind each. This was a precaution against the possibility that one train would leave the track and the other would run wild. As I have stated, the cars were empty. (I would also like to emphasize, at this point, that the oft-repeated story that the cars were loaded with cross-ties to give added weight is simply not true. Some ties were piled beside the track, to be used in repairing the line, and that fact may be the source of the story.)

As an added precaution, we removed all tools and spare pins from the engines and any other loose objects that might fly through the air when the trains collided.

Mr. Crush's idea that people would come in large numbers to see two trains collide at high speed was verified on September 15. From early morning, excursion trains unloaded passengers, and it was estimated that at least 40,000 people came to see the wreck. There were excited spectators from all parts of the United States. By early afternoon the last excursion train had unloaded and gone to either Waco or Hillsboro. Momentarily we expected the signal to start our run. A dispatcher near the grandstand was to give the signal, received by a telegrapher at each end.

Time crawled by and still the signal did not come. (We later learned that the people had crowded so close to the track that the officials had to practically force them back to a safe area.)

Finally, late in the afternoon, our operator hollered "Two minutes!" and raised his hand. When the two minutes had ticked off, he hollered "GO!" and dropped his hand.

EVERYTHING went off exactly as we had planned it. Engineer Stanton opened the throttle to the clamp, counted sixteen puffs, moved the reverse lever to the second notch, and then got off. I was out of his way, but waited until he was on the steps before I got off.

Tensely we watched our train run its mile course. At the end of two minutes we saw a great cloud of steam and saw parts of the engine flying through the air. From that sickening sight and from the roar of sound, we knew that the unexpected had happened — a boiler explosion. We watched numbly, praying that nobody had been killed or hurt. That was too much to hope for, as we were soon to find out.

The track, which had been cut back of our starting place, was connected in a few minutes, and we rode the wrecker to the wrecked trains. It took some time to get the wrecker close enough to work, as the trains were swarming with souvenir hunters.

Only one man suffered fatal injuries, although several others were badly hurt. J. C. Deane, an official photographer who was on the stand built for his firm, was the most severely injured of those who eventually recovered. Deane was struck in the eye by a flying bolt. He was taken to a Waco hospital, where the bolt was removed from his brain. It was over two inches long, with a nut on the end of it. Deane recovered and continued in photography for many years.

As an official photographer, Deane was close to the wreck. Of course, if we could have foreseen the boiler explosion, nobody would have been allowed close up. In fact, if the danger of explosion had even been suspected, the stunt would never have been pulled off at all. All other casualties were caused by the fact that people had crowded past the

Before the crowd reached the wreck. Of the 12 cars, only three on one train and two on the other remained upright.

barriers which had been set. Crush said that the people had first been asked to back up, then ordered back. Some obeyed, some did not, and it was among these daring ones that the injuries occurred.

The unexpected boiler explosion may be explained by the peculiarity of this collision. In addition to the mile a minute speed of both trains, both engines were working steam and no brakes were set. In any other type of collision, an engineer will set brakes and close throttle the instant he sees trouble ahead.

CRUSH was not blamed for the explosion. He remained with the Katy, became general passenger agent for the line, and held the post until he retired. Both firemen were promoted to engineers, and all four men in the engine crews were in service until they retired. I myself retired in 1950, the oldest Katy engineer in point of service on the entire line, after a railroading career that began away back in 1892. I believe that L. G. Parsons, who was a brakeman, and myself are the last living participants in the big show at Crush, Texas - the "City that lived for a day." Parsons, 94, lives in Smithville, Texas.

Over the years, many persons have asked me what purpose did the collision serve; what did it actually prove?

Well, the major purpose, of course, was publicity and profit for the M.K.T. Railroad, and that purpose was achieved. Also, as I told the newspaper reporters on my 84th birthday a year ago, it proved a lot of people will go a long way to see a train wreck!

Souvenir hunters swarmed over the wreck. It took some time to clear a way through the crowd for the wreckers.

Christmas In A Canyon

(Continued from page 47)

were several herds of antelope and mustangs in sight. The Major, mounted on Old Sideways, was ambling on ahead. A topographer had mighty little to map on the plains; he drew a square for a section and lettered "L.P." neatly in a corner. Suddenly, the Major and Old Sideways began to sink beneath the surface. We yelled and he turned and waved his hat as though cheering on his men at Kennesaw Mountain fight. Then he disappeared beneath the plain.

The cattle, antelope, and mustangs were in plain view for miles ahead beyond where he disappeared. A calm buzzard floated on motionless wings about a mile above us. We wondered if that meant anything. They are wise birds.

Dave loped ahead, started to sink, stopped and called for a point at short range.

We hurried on; reached and passed Dave; started down a gentle slope and stopped on the brink of the Palo Duro Canyon.

To see the sight in front of us was enough to make the heart miss a beat. It could not be looked upon without causing the beholder to thrill with appreciation of the wonderful works of the Great Architect of the universe.

HERE, the result of the slow erosive action of waters through hundreds of thousands — perhaps millions — of years, was a gash cut through the plains for fifty miles. In places it is over a thousand feet deep and five miles in width. It is one of the wonder spots of America. Along the rim we saw a band of yellow, where the plains grass dipped to the rim rock. This rim rock, a heavy band of gray, capped the canyon as far as the eye could reach. Below it the exposed strata showed as though some giant hand had drawn brushes, dipped in many colors, along the miles of canyon walls. Pink, blue, red, gray, green, yellow, purple, brown, blended in the distance into a lovely purple shade. At intervals were ledges clothed with the deep green of tall cedars. Diamond-like points of light were reflected from springs gushing out of the rocks to fall in terraced cascades and to be lost in the sand and gravel at the bottom of the gorge.

We gazed in silence for a long, long time. The air was like crystal in the canyon that crisp winter day.

Movements along a great cedar-covered ledge, a half mile across the gash and five hundred feet down, caught Dave's huntsman's eyes. He pointed. "Look," he almost whispered, "two bears! And over there, turkeys—more than twenty."

The Major sat on a rock feverishly doing topography. He had plenty to do. He was happy with the slopes of all degrees and directions; with precipices here and there.

To the south, mustangs, antelope, and cattle contentedly grazed. We camped where we found some rain water caught in large potholes in the cap-rock.

Next day it took Dave half a day of hard climbing to reach the south side of the canyon, where he established line points which we triangulated. We could not hope to measure accurately across that gorge.

The wagons had to go to the junction of the Palo Duro and Terra Blanca canyons to effect a crossing to the south side.

We ran many survey lines over the plains and in the canyons. Much of the work was by triangulation and was very interesting indeed.

We camped one Saturday night at a waterhole on a nameless creek which ran into the Palo Duro. Sunday morning all the men were in the tents resting when P. G. went outside and at once called in an awe-struck voice: "Great Caesar's Ghost! Boys, look here!"

The wonder-working mirage was busy. The Palo Duro lay extended beneath us and up in the heavens was another Palo Duro canyon—upside down! Every stratum of rock, every clump of trees, the gleaming surfaces of water—all, to the minutest detail, were plainly to be seen reversed in the sky above. The phenomenon lasted for nearly an hour. Seldom is such a wonderful sight beheld by man.

P. G. named the creek near our camp "Sunday Creek." It is on the map now.

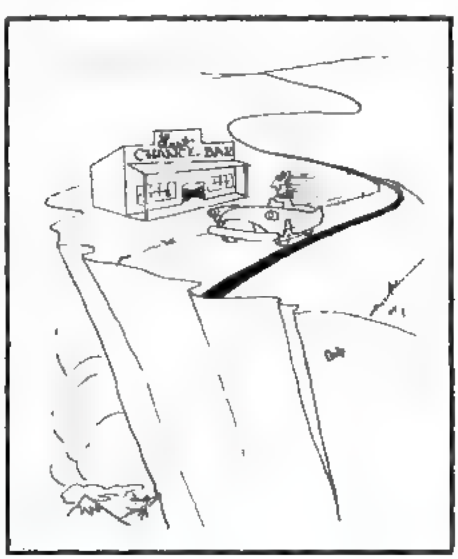
The work on the south side was completed, and we moved back to the north side of the canyon and worked until the latter part of December.

There had been no very severe weather —rather warm days and cool, delightful nights. The air was like fine wine. Work was a vast delight. Sleep under the stars was a dip into the fountain of perpetual youth.

ONE of the wagons had gone to town for supplies and returned two days before Christmas. On the morning of the twenty-fourth we broke camp, and the heavy wagons started for a new camp site several miles to the east of where our first line had crossed the canyon. The line crew went several miles to the north and started to run a line south toward the new camp. All went well until about the middle of the afternoon.

Dave had just taken a front-sight and given the "O.K." signal to come ahead, when we saw him wave his arms in a signal that meant "Look." He seemed to point to the north. We looked, but could see nothing unusual. When we reached Dave and asked what was the matter, he answered, "Norther coming," and loped off for another sight. There did seem to be a slight haze in the north—low down on the surface of the plains.

When we reached the next hub and looked back, there was a dun colored arch distinct above the plain, far to the north. At the next stop we established a corner and dug four pits and built an earth mound. I remember we were quite warm from the work. By the time we were through this—hardly three-quarters of an hour from the time Dave's sharp eyes had seen the approaching norther—the dun colored arch extended to the horizon from east to west and was almost upon us from the north. It did not extend very far above the plains. P. G. gave the order to quit work and make for camp.



The outfit moved with celerity. The Major and Old Sideways had gone south some time before. Dave and Martin let their ponies lope. Sebe shook the reins at his long legged light-wagon team and they galloped madly from the storm. But it caught us in a few minutes. With a rush of ice cold wind, a snarl like an angry beast, an awful roar, changing into a long drawn out wail which continued to rise and fall—the yellow norther of the plains struck and enveloped us.

The air was full of ice needles that drove into the exposed flesh and stuck, but did not seem to melt. The snow seemed to parallel the ground in its flight; yet the plains grass was covered by it in a few minutes and it rolled along the ground with the wind. That wind didn't turn aside. When it hit you, it just kept right on through your body, as though your flesh offered no obstruction to it. There wasn't a hill between us and the North Pole, and that wind must have come all the way—and gathering power at every jump.

We had been sweating ten minutes before. Now we pulled the wagon sheet over us, huddling under it. But the wind and cold were pitiless and cut and stung despite the cover.

Sebe let his mules run for several miles. They ran straight south and made no effort to turn. The norther attended to that.

We couldn't see ten feet ahead of the team, but we knew that somewhere ahead of us was a thousand foot canyon with sides nearly straight down for several hundred feet. We knew we had gone a long way and we thought we were within a mile of the cap-rock when those two Missouri mules suddenly stopped. Fortunately nothing broke and we managed to stay in the wagon.

Sebe pulled to the left and urged the team. They didn't want to turn sideways to the wind and sleet, but Sebe managed to make them move. Almost immediately we started down grade and in less than half a minute were below the plains level.

Sebe turned the team to the right, and we scrambled down onto a bench, high above the bottom of the canyon, but two hundred feet below the top of a precipice of solid rock.

The wind roared far above us but there was no gust that reached to our level. The snow fell in sheets about us, but dropped calmly straight down. And there, by our good luck, was the camp. The teamsters had pitched the tents—a courtesy extended only in time of stress —and Old Bill had a fire going and supper was well on the way.

AFTER we had thawed out and moved around a bit, one of the boys noticed a cleft in the face of the precipice about thirty feet above its base, and in the cleft were three or four dead cedars. He threw a blazing piece of wood into the dry limbs, and it hung there and set fire to one of the trees. In a short time we had a roaring torch fifty or sixty feet tall. We ate supper by its light and shortly

(Continued on page 58)

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Great oratory was in its flower a half-century ago, but none excelled Herman Knickerbocker's

Fabulous gambler Riley Grannan was "laid out" in a back room of the Variety Show House, still standing at Rawhide, prior to his history-making funeral sermon preached by unfrocked sky-pilot Herman W. Knickerbocker, April, 1908.

Sagebrush Sermon

By NELL MURBARGER

WHEN ALL the gold in Rawhide's towering hills shall have been reduced to bullion and not even a post is left to guide the desert wayfarer to the spot where was witnessed the greatest stampede in Western mining history, posterity will remember Rawhide for the funeral oration that was pronounced over the bier of Riley Grannan, by H. W. Knickerbocker . . ."

George Graham Rice, notorious mining stock promoter and uninhibited opportunist of Nevada's boom days, never spoke truer words than in this brief tribute to the eloquence of Herman Knickerbocker, whose funeral sermon over the bier of Riley Grannan has been regarded, for over half a century, as a Western classic.

Grannan, world-famous gambler and plunger, whose wager of $275,000 on the outcome of a single horse race is said to have been the largest track bet ever laid in the United States, had followed the boom to Rawhide, where he contracted pneumonia and died, April 3, 1908.

Riley had been a man after Rawhide's own turbulent heart, and the desert boomcamp was determined to give him a 24-carat sendoff, with a fancy sky-pilot and all the trimmings. Preachers, however, were few and far between in the Rawhide of 1908; and with time for the obsequies at hand, the chagrined funeral committee was forced to admit that the nearest approach to a minister it had found was Herman Knickerbocker, a has-been preacher, assertedly ousted by a California church because of his increasingly liberal views.

Hustled into the backroom of the Variety Showhouse, where mourners were already gathering at Riley's makeshift bier, Knickerbocker delivered an extemporaneous sermon 2,000 words in length. Taken down in shorthand by "Rattlesnake Shorty", a down-and-out court reporter, the sermon later was published in Rawhide newspapers, whence it was seized upon by the world as a classic comparable to Robert G. Ingersoll's celebrated eulogy over the bier of his brother. Since that day, Knickerbocker's sermon has been published and quoted throughout the English-speaking world, and brochures containing it have been sold by tens of thousands of copies.

Condensed to one-third its original length, the Rawhide classic follows:

I FEEL THAT it is incumbent upon me, to state that in standing here I occupy no ministerial or prelate position," said the unfrocked man of God. "I am simply a prospector. I make no claims . . . to religion, except the religion of humanity, the brotherhood of man . . .

"Riley Grannan was born in Paris, Kentucky, about forty years ago . . . From the position of bellboy in a hotel, he rose rapidly to a celebrity of world-wide fame. He was one of the greatest plungers, probably, this continent has ever produced.

"He died day before yesterday in Rawhide.

"This is a very brief statement. You have the birth and the period of the grave. Who can fill the interim? Who can speak of his hopes and his fears? Who can solve the mystery of the quiet hours that only himself knew? I cannot.

"Sometimes, when I look over the circumstances of human life, a curse rises to my lips . . . When I see the ambitions of man defeated . . . when I see his aim and purpose frustrated . . . when I see the outstretched hand, just about to grasp the flag of victory, clutch instead the emblem of defeat, I ask, 'What is Life?' . . . Dreams, awakening and death; a pendulum 'twixt a smile and a tear; a momentary halt within the waste . . . a child-blown bubble that reflects light and shadow . . . and is gone. . .

" . . . Riley Grannan . . . accepted both defeat and victory with equanimity. He was a man whose exterior was as placid and gentle as I have ever seen, and yet . . . he was absolutely invincible in spirit . . . He was a dead-game sport . . . I believe that when you can say one is 'a dead-game sport' you have reached the climax of human philosophy . . .

"I know that there are those who will condemn him . . . who believe today that he is reaping the reward of a misspent life . . . They . . . fail to see the moral beauty of a character lived outside their puritanical ideas. His goodness was not of the type that reached its highest manifestations in any ceremonial piety . . . (but) of the type that finds expression in the handclasp . . . in a word of cheer to a discouraged

(Continued on following page)

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ELECTRON

brother . . . in quiet deeds of charity . . . in friendship . . . in manhood.

" . . . I believe that the man who . . . is able to smooth one wrinkle from the brow of care, is able to change one moan or sob into a song, is able to wipe away one tear and in its place put a jewel of joy—this man is a public benefactor.

"I believe that some of Riley Grannan's money was 'wasted' in this way.

"We stand at last in the presence of the Great Mystery. I know nothing about it, nor do you . . . I do not know whether there be a future life or not . . . I have watched the wicket gate close behind many and many a pilgrim. No word has come back to me. The gate is closed . . .

"This may be infidelity; but if it is, I would like to know what faith means I came into this universe without my volition—came and found a loving mother's arms to receive me. I had nothing to do with the preparation for my reception here. I have no power to change the environment of the future, but the same power which prepared the loving arms of a mother to receive me here, will make proper reception for me there. God knows better than I what is good for me, and I leave it with God.

" . . . As we stand in the presence of death we have no knowledge, but always . . . there gleams the star of hope. Let us hope, then, that it may be the morning star of eternal day . . . Did you ever pause to think that this old world of ours is constantly swinging into the dawn? . . . With every revolution, it is dawning somewhere . . . Let us believe, then, that in the development of the human soul, as it swings forward toward its destiny, it is constantly swinging nearer and nearer to the sun.

"And now the time has come to say . . . Goodbye, old man . . . Let these flowers, Riley, with their petaled lips and perfumed breath, speak in beauty and fragrance the sentiments that are too tender for words. . . "

THUS was sped along his Last Trail, the world-renowned plunger who had seen millions of dollars pass through his hands in the halcyon days of "come easy, go easy," but who died virtually broke. At time of his death, Riley Grannan had only $103 in cash and a gold watch and chain—which assets were delivered, intact, to his heirs. The $2000 necessary to meet costs of Riley's final illness, funeral, and subsequent transportation to his burial place at Paris, Kentucky, was supplied "on the house" by generous-hearted friends at Rawhide, Nevada—the rough little desert boomcamp which had taken Riley to her bosom and made him one of her own.

Lightning on the Plains

(Continued from page 51)

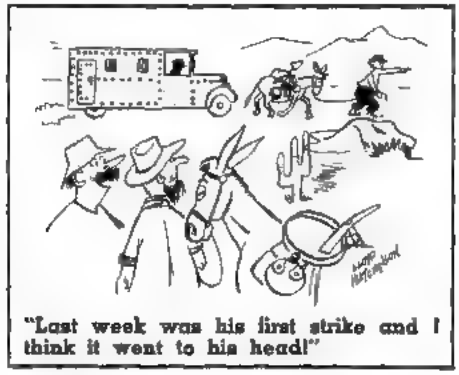
AN old-time trail driver, telling of one hailstorm, said, "It nearly beat us to death." He described the killing of hundreds of jackrabbits, antelope, and yearlings. Sometimes the hail would be four inches on the ground. The men who were out in the hailstorm had knots and scars all over their hands and backs. Some had big blood blisters raised by the hailstones. One trailhand said, "The beat of the hail on my head made me crazy. I would have run, but didn't know which way to go."

Actually there was no place to go, unless it was under the chuckwagon. Occasionally there were trees, but trees are notoriously dangerous as shelter during a thunderstorm, as these men soon learned. Even hail was preferable to being struck by a bolt of lightning "running down" a tree.

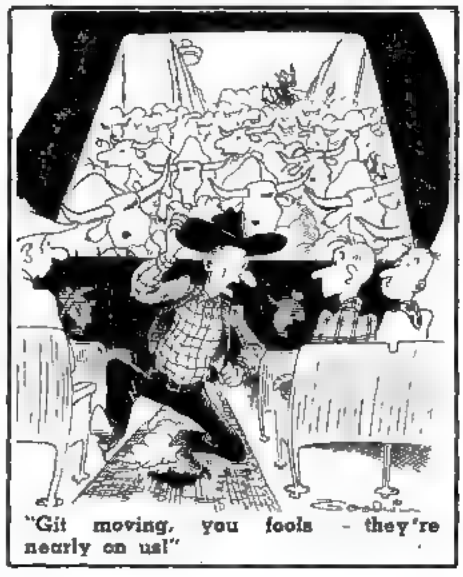
The days of the trail drives on the Western plains are ended, but many an old-timer must recall, in nightmares perhaps, the awesome sight of milling cattle, long, pointed horns touched with weird light, and frantic men trying to hold the herd—each man partly outlined in eerie foxfire; and above all, the heaving skies aflame with fierce fingers of lightning clawing at the earth, while the sound of bawling cattle was drowned in shattering claps of thunder.

Yes, the memory of lightning on the plains, when there was no place to hide, is too vivid for remembering as anything but a nightmare of sound and fury.

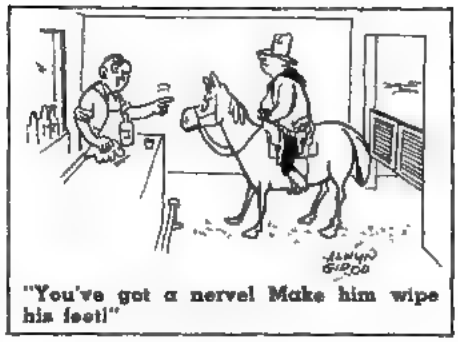
"Some days it don't pay for a feller to get outta bed!"



"Last week was his first strike and I think it went to his head!"



"Git moving, you fools - they're nearly on us!"



"You've got a nerve! Make him wipe his feet!"

Christmas In A Canyon

(Continued from page 56)

thereafter the trees burnt off from the stumps, and a wonderful avalanche of flaming wood and coals piled itself at the base of the rock. It burnt for hours and warmed quite a large space around camp.

When we had finished "first smoke," P. G. announced that he had a new novel by "The Duchess" and would read to us. We helped Old Bill wash the dishes so that he could hear the story, he being naturally romantic and a great admirer of The Duchess.

The light from the great fire was sufficient, and we gathered around P. G. and listened as he read of real high-toned society folk—even an occasional nobleman and titled lady—who entered the scenes with perfect grace and beauty and who made love in a most delicate and refined way. It was all so different from what we knew!

Late at night, while P. G. was reading a very tender passage, he was interrupted by a maniacal chorus of shrieks and howls—deep-throated, menacing, and terrifying. The reading ceased until the pack had yelled their way a long distance from our sheltering bank over the snow-covered plain. The lobo wolves were hungry and were hunting.

Again P. G.'s voice took us back to the tenderness and beauty of the Irish land, and we thrilled with the hero and laughed with "Dickey Browne."

The light from the fire died down, but the glowing coals still melted the snow around us. Old Bill lit a lantern and placed it on a tomato box by P. G.'s shoulder.

The Duchess was no mean writer, and her description of garden fetes, picnics, balls, and love-making gripped and held us. We were all young, in years at least, and each one saw himself the hero of the tale, and each made the delicate remarks at the proper time, and, at the end, each of us thrilled to the kiss of promise of the lovely heroine.

P. G. finished the tale and we sat awhile in blissful silence. Then Dave murmured:

"That's a hum-dinger of a love story!"

"Let's go to Ireland on a cattle boat," suggested Martin.

"Sure! Let's!"

P. G. looked at his watch. "Good Gracious! It's past one o'clock! Merry Christmas!"

We shook hands all around. Old Bill sighed deeply.

"It sure started fine, Chief. I looked at my watch, just at twelve, and that cuss was putting his arm around that lady for the first time, and it was a Christmas Eve and she wished him 'Merry Christmas.' Doggone the luck! G'night."

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Illustrated by Curtis Wingate

Right behind the miners and adventurers and gamblers they came—the old-time "Devil-fighting" preachers. Such a man was

The Remarkable Reverend Long

By DALE MOREY

IN rip-roaring California of the middle 1800's, the growth of towns and mining camps was little short of magical. Some excited gold seeker had only to hint of a fresh strike and the stampede to the new diggings was on—and another boomtown in the making.

First came the men aflame with gold fever; next the gamblers, saloon keepers and dance hall girls who would quickly take the treasure the miners dug from the earth. Right on the heels of the latter bunch came the circuit riding preachers, ready to fight the Devil tooth and nail. They were hardy men, these itinerant men of God. Armed only with courage and righteousness—backed sometimes by a shotgun—they rode boldly into the toughest mining camps and declared their holy mission in ringing tones that brooked no interference.

Such a dedicated soldier of the Lord was the Reverend Samuel Long, famous even among his hell-for-leather brethren as a sure-enough fire and brimstone preacher. To the miners the reverend was known as Long Sam, and in truth the nickname fitted him better than his long black coat. His long face was framed in long whiskers, and his legs were so long that when he sat his mule, he had to tie his spurs around his knees. But the remarkable thing about Sam was his fiery sermons. Even the worst sinners got to feeling uncomfortable when Sam fixed them with his piercing eyes and cut loose a flood of scorching oratory.

But the day came when Long Sam decided to settle down. He felt that it was time he did some preaching from a pulpit instead of from the back of a jackass. So he determined to build a church of his own in the whooping boomtown of Columbia, California.

From the beginning of his campaign, Reverend Long was faced with stiff competition. His first church—like most other buildings in Columbia—was a tent, strategically located between Carlson's Gaming Emporium and a Mexican fandango tent. The proprietors of those establishments were naturally perturbed with the reverend's presence in their midst and with his unorthodox and effective ways of gaining an audience.

Mr. Carlson, owner of the Gaming Emporium, was particularly upset when Long Sam stalked into his place of business one day and announced that free drinks could be had next door. The customers immediately headed for Sam's tent. No free whiskey was forthcoming, but the Reverend Long—with a Bible and a six-gun resting on his improvised pulpit—lashed them with an hour-long sermon on the evils of drink.

The businessmen of Columbia were quick to take a stand after this episode. They held a meeting and decided that the "Bible-totin' varmint" would have to go. If Long Sam continued to hold forth with his denunciatory sermons, they would break up his outfit and run him out of the diggings.

If the miners hadn't intervened, the lanky preacher might have delivered his last sermon at his next meeting. They weren't worried about being saved, but thought that Sam was a straight-shooting old gent and deserved a fair shake in his battle to rid the camp of the Devil. So, packing their shooting-irons, they all turned out for Long Sam's next meeting. There were no interruptions and the disgruntled gamblers and saloon keepers kicked in with the miners when Sam passed the collection plate.

Later, these civic-minded miners put up the gold dust to build Sam a real church. It was only a small clapboard structure and lacked a bell to summon the townsfolk to worship, but the tall preacher was delighted with it. It was considerable of a shock to him to realize that the very men who had contributed freely to the building of the

(Continued on page 62)

THE HOLE IN THE WALL

BY FOREST CROSSEN

Illustrated by Keith Soward

The pretty dance hall girl stretched her luck a mite too far when she tried to fool a cowpuncher TWICE!

GUY NEVILLS pointed to a photograph of old Fort Benton, Montana, and began to laugh. "You probably think I'm loco, laughing like this, but that old brick building there reminds me of something that happened to a partner of mine in Fort Benton. Plenty of things used to happen in that old town, you know."

Guy was right as four aces in a row. For sheer color, excitement and romance, few western towns approached Fort Benton. Benton, head of navigation on the Missouri River until the railroads crossed the northern plains, was the social and trading center for a vast area. It began as a fur trading post, served as supply town for the gold camps of Virginia City and Helena, and later became trail's end for herds of Texas longhorns and a ranchers' town.

"Harry McCune and I were in Fort Benton for a little fun. We'd just come in off a roundup in the Bearpaw Mountains. Harry used to drink hard . . . and he was a fighter. He was a slender little man, but he was powerful.

"I didn't drink or gamble, so Harry gave me his money — all except fifteen or twenty dollars. Right away he started in to drink in the saloons along Front street."

Front Street, stretching along the Missouri River, was lined with saloons, gambling houses, dance halls, hotels and restaurants. During the great steamboat days it ran night and day. That tradition lingered.

"That first night," continued Guy, "Harry met a girl in a dance hall. She was a good-looking girl and they took up with each other right off. He bought a lot of drinks, which she received a percentage on. Of course, she never drank whiskey; what the waiter brought her was cold tea. Harry got pretty drunk.

"They used to have rooms up there in that old brick building. This girl took Harry up to her room.

"The next morning when he woke up — with a big head, of course — she was gone. And so was his money.

"He hunted me up and we had breakfast. He was pretty sore, so I bought him a couple of eye-openers, hoping he wouldn't see the girl until he got to feeling better.

"That evening he asked me for five dollars. He was straightened up in good shape by this time. 'Along about the time the dance hall closes,' he said, 'I want you to go down to Charley Green's livery stable and saddle up our horses. Take our things down there and wait.'

"I gave him the money and laid a hand on his shoulder. 'Don't you kill nobody. You're up to something.'

" 'Don't worry about that. Just you be down there waiting, after I go up to the room with this girl.'

"I watched him dancing with the girl, who never let on that anything had happened. Pretty soon they were as thick as fleas. About midnight they pulled out together.

"Right after Harry hit the bed, he went to sleep, like he was drunker than all get out.

"The girl waited a while. Then she got up and took his money out of his pants pocket. She went over to the wall, pushed aside a picture and took out a loose brick. She put the money in, replaced the brick and came back to bed.

"Harry had been lying there, watching every move she made.

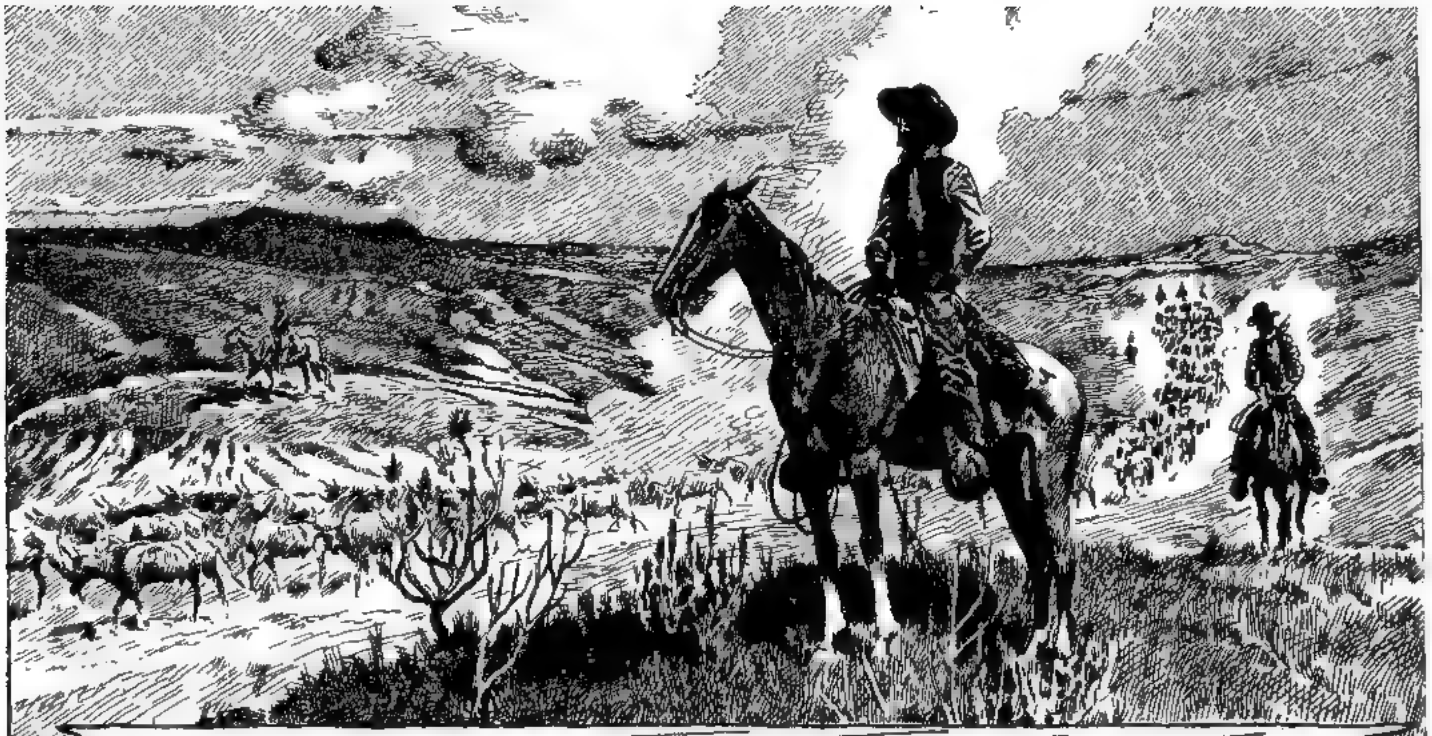
"After a while he got sicker than the devil. 'I've got to have some Jamaica Ginger,' he told her, tears streaming out of his eyes. 'I'm one sick human. Hurry up!'

"It was two or three blocks to the nearest saloon, but she put on her clothes and away she went.

"Right away Harry was up and dressed. He went over, pushed aside the picture and took out the brick. He grabbed what money there was, slipped out the back way and came down to the livery barn.

" 'Let's go,' he said. He wasn't any more drunk than I was and there was a happy ring in his voice.

(Continued on page 62)



THE DEATH OF JOE LOVING

BY MARC PETERSON

Illustrated By B. D. Titsworth

Wounded by Comanche bullets, Joe Loving said: "I'm dying. No sense of your getting killed too. Get out of here and get back to the outfit."

FOR scores of decades prior to the Civil War, longhorned cattle by the thousands roamed the vast spaces of southern Texas. Since there was no available market for beef, it had no value. The end of the Civil War brought railroad penetration into the Midwest on a transcontinental scale, providing the necessary link between this vast hoofed wealth and the meat-hungry millions of the East. Some daring cattlemen, realizing the potential value of their animals, initiated the "long drive" between Texas, Dodge City and Abilene, western termini of the railroads at that period.

In 1866 rancher Charles Goodnight remarked that the Palo Pinto country was alive with cattle lacking a market. He determined to find a northern market. Goodnight knew that in New Mexico, Government agencies needed beef to feed the many Indians they were "loose herding" there. He also knew that to reach these agencies he would have to cross hostile Comanche country.

The next problem Goodnight faced was to find a reliable man to go with him on this perilous drive. He asked several men before he met Joe Loving. Joe was probably the most experienced cattleman in Texas at that time, as well as the first man to trail a herd out of the state. Goodnight was plenty discouraged when he met Loving, for each previous candidate for the trip discovered he had pressing business elsewhere when propositioned. Goodnight didn't blame them, for the desolate region he planned to cross swarmed with Comanches. Furthermore, nobody knew the conditions as to water and grass—the prime requisites in moving herds of cattle. Nevertheless, when Goodnight told Loving of his daring plan, Joe studied on it a spell, spat reflectively and "allowed" he'd take a hand.

IN the spring of 1867, the two men had contracts for the delivery of two herds at Fort Sumner. Having begun their roundup early in March, Goodnight and Loving reached the headwaters of the Concho by the end of March with the two herds. Each herd numbered about two thousand head.

"We'll stop here long enough to put a good fill on the herds," said Goodnight, "and point straight west for the Pecos."

A ninety-six mile expanse called the *Llano Estacado* (Staked Plain) lay before them. After two days' rest, the herds were thrown on the trail and driven away to the west, without rest or stop, for three days and four nights. The weather was extremely hot and the alkali dust rose up over the caravan in a huge cloud, marking its progress for miles.

At a distance of fifteen miles from the Pecos, the appearance of the herds suddenly changed; heads were eagerly raised, and the leaders stepped briskly forward and broke into a trot. This phenomenon of a trail herd sensing water has never been satisfactorily explained, but veteran cowboys say the cattle *smell* the water even at a distance of many miles.

Now the cattle no longer had to be driven. The cowboys had to work hard to restrain the beasts, otherwise when the lead cattle reached the Pecos, the ones behind would run them into the water and drown them.

Both herds lay at rest at Horsehead Crossing for three days before starting north for Fort Sumner. Then came the drive up the wide, level valley of the Pecos, through thickets of tornilla and mesquite, horses and cattle grazing belly-deep in the juicy zacaton.

Although they had a few skirmishes with the Comanches and lost a few hundred head of cattle, and though Loving got an arrow through the neck which Goodnight pulled out with a pair of nippers, they kept moving steadily along.

Late in June, when the partners were a hundred miles north of Horsehead Crossing, they decided to separate. It was necessary for one of them to reach Fort Sumner before the beef contracts were awarded in July, and also to make arrangements for the arrival of the two herds. So it was decided that Loving and Bill Wilson would go ahead. Wilson was a one-armed cattleman who had brought a herd up from the Clear Fork of the Brazos.

It was a dangerous trip for two men to make alone. "The only way you can make it, Joe," cautioned Goodnight, "is to ride at night and hole up during the day."

"Sure, Charley," Loving agreed casually.

The first two nights out they followed Goodnight's advice. But Loving, detesting night riding, one *(Continued next page)*

morning persuaded Wilson to give it up.

"Let's keep riding, Bill, and see if we can't make some time. We ain't seen hide nor hair of any Comanches."

NOTHING happened until about two in the afternoon, when Wilson spotted a cloud of dust moving toward them.

"Look there!" he exclaimed. "Comanches!"

Loving stared intently. "Big war party," he decided. "They've seen us, too. Let's get the hell out of here!"

They spurred their horses into a run and headed directly for the Pecos, about four miles to the northwest. Scrambling down a hundred-foot bluff, they crossed the river and hid themselves among the sand dunes and cane brakes. They took cover just in time, for the Indians were right behind them. In the hot, vicious gunfight that followed, Loving was wounded in the arm and side. Heavily armed with repeating rifles and six-guns, the white men were able to hold off the Indians until dark, when the Comanches withdrew.

Toward dawn, Loving begged Wilson to leave. "I'm dying," he said. "No sense of your getting killed, too. Get out of here and get back to the outfit."

Reluctantly, Wilson agreed. He left the six-shooting rifle and the five six-guns with Joe, taking only his Henry rifle. Carefully he eased himself into the river, and drifted under a clump of smartweeds held over his head until well past the Comanche sentries.

Three days later, Wilson stumbled into the outfit nearly dead from exhaustion. Immediately, Goodnight took fourteen men and hastened to find Loving. But Joe was not to be found. Goodnight could only assume that the Comanches had killed him and thrown his body into the river.

About two weeks later, the outfit met a party out of Fort Sumner which informed them that Loving was at the Fort. His bullet wounds had not proved fatal, and the next night after Wilson's departure he, too, had slipped into the river and drifted safely past the Indians. He crawled out on shore and lay hidden in the weeds all the next day. The following night, crawling through the brush, he had found a trail and followed it until he dropped unconscious. He remained where he had fallen for five days, when some Mexicans came along and carried him to Fort Sumner.

Goodnight and Wilson hurried to the Fort. As soon as they saw Loving's condition, they realized that his arm would have to come off. But it was too late. Joe was too far spent, and died from the shock of the operation on September 25, 1867.

"He was a game one," said Charles Goodnight simply when the Army doctor told him of Loving's death. The great cattleman's accolade stands as a fitting epitaph for Joe Loving.

The Hole in the Wall

(Continued from page 60)

"When we'd ridden up Helena Hill, he pulled up his horse.

"'Let's find out something.'

"All this time I didn't know what he'd done — but I knew he'd done something. I knew Harry.

"He asked me to light a match, and he started counting money . . . He had $280. Then he told me what had happened, laughing fit to kill.

"'I'd like to see her face when she comes in and finds me gone. She'll be mad enough to kill me.'

"'We'd better not show up in Fort Benton for a long time,' I told him.

"WE didn't show up in Fort Benton for about a year. Again we came in off a roundup. Harry was grinning, and I knew that he was up to something.

"'Better not let that girl see you,' I cautioned him. 'She'll put a knife between your ribs.'

"'Could be, but I don't think so.'

"We took a room in the Grand Union Hotel and cleaned up. Harry pulled out a false mustache and put it on. It made a lot of difference in his appearance, made him look older.

"He headed for the dance hall as soon as it was dark and I followed him. There was a big crowd there, and he went right in. It wasn't long until I saw him having a drink with this girl. Then I saw him get down on the floor on his hands and knees, and she got on his back.

"In those days it was a great stunt to get a girl on your back and try to buck her off. If you could, she had to buy the drinks for the house.

"I got pretty nervous. I expected any moment to see her whip out a knife and start cutting him.

"As I told you before, Harry was very strong and active. Pretty soon off went this girl. Everybody laughed.

"She got up, dusted herself off . . . and bought the drinks. If she ever recognized Harry she never let on."

The Remarkable Reverend Long

(Continued from page 59)

church would be just as quick to wash the foundations from under it if they thought there was pay dirt there.

Buying real estate was a risky proposition in those days in California. A man might buy a piece of land one day and come back the next to find that he owned nothing but a hole in the ground. So it was with Sam. His little church rested upon a small hill adjacent to mining claims, and the miners kept digging and washing away more and more dirt until finally Reverend Long had to stand guard with a shotgun to protect his holy edifice from toppling into the yawning sluices.

As with ministers everywhere, in every time, the problem of church attendance also harried Sam. His church had only a few pews and the fact that he couldn't keep even these few filled for services troubled him as much as the fact that the building itself was literally being undermined. Sure enough, the Devil was getting in his licks and Sam determined to beat him at his own tricky game.

There was, for example, the time he spread the rumor to the gullible public that the Reverend Samuel Long would reveal the location of a new lode of gold at one of his Sunday meetings. And—in a way—he did. To the expectant crowd of gold-seekers who jammed the church, the Reverend addressed his sermon on the text, "There is a place for gold." For two hours he proceeded to expound that the place for gold was not on the dice tables or in the saloon tills, but in the collection plate to do the work of the Lord. The miners took the trick in good humor and heaped the collection plate with dust, but refused to be caught again when Sam tried to repeat the dodge a few weeks later.

IT was Long Sam's privilege to use the town fire bell to call his fast-dwindling flock to services. However, most of the townsfolk had become so inured to the slow, solemn call of the bell that they could sleep right through the sound. Late one Sunday morning, every man in camp was rudely awakened by the loud, imperative summons of the bell ringing the fire call.

Half clad, everybody headed for the town square. The fire chief hauled out the rickety contraption that passed for a hook-and-ladder truck, tossed a load of buckets in the back end, and followed the crowd. By the time he arrived at the scene, hundreds of volunteers had already gathered.

There was no sign of smoke anywhere, only Long Sam pulling on the bell rope like a man possessed.

"Sam!" the fire chief yelled. "Where in blazes is the fire?"

Old Sam couldn't have asked for a better straight man. He dropped the bell rope and turned to face the crowd.

"So you want to know where the fire is, do you?" he boomed. "I'll tell you where it is. I sure enough will!"

Sam drew himself to his full height on the bell platform to address the motley congregation he had gathered. His voice rang over the assemblage like the voice of doom.

"When I rang the call to church this morning, not a soul in this town of Sodom answered. But you've all come down to find out about the fire, haven't you? And I'll tell you where it is. That fire's in Hell—and if you don't come to church when I ring that call the next time, you'll wind up smack dab in the middle of it!"

The next Sunday the little church was full and the collection plate overflowing. But the revival didn't last, although for a few more years Long Sam jousted valiantly with the forces of evil in Columbia. When two new churches were built there, he decided it was time for him to move on. He heard the call to the raw frontier, where he would continue his never-ending battle to save souls.

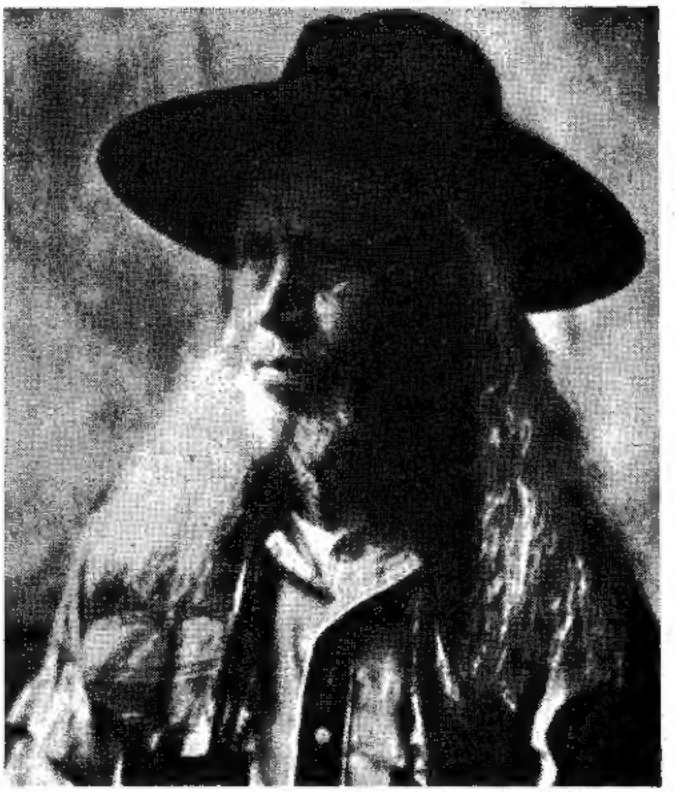
On a bright morning in the late 1850's, the Reverend Samuel Long bought a new mule. He rode off into the mountains to spread the Word of God and to become another legend of the old West.

"NOW you tell me! Been drinking it thirty years."

Texas Jack, last of the great Oklahoma bandits, tried to kill me that July day when

I LOOKED DEATH IN THE EYE!

BY HOMER CROY



Texas Jack, the man who almost pulled down on Croy.

If you've never had a real old-time Western outlaw threaten to kill you and back up his threat with a Colt .45, then you'll be interested in the following.

The ex-outlaw who threatened to finish me off was Texas Jack. The place was 17 South Boston Avenue, Tulsa, Oklahoma, and the time was July, 1948. Readers of TRUE WEST will, I hope, be pleased to know that he did not succeed.

The reason he wanted to do such a heinous deed was that I said he hadn't known Jesse James. That was all; just that. The crusty old coot had lectured before countless audiences telling them "Me and Jesse James was buddies"—then I came along and said that he didn't even know Jesse, let alone pal around with him. *I* made him real mad.

Texas Jack's real name was Nathaniel West, and he was born in Madison County, Arkansas, in 1862. Eventually he drifted from Arkansas and made Oklahoma his stamping ground. He was Oklahoma's last great train robber, and was in the business ten years before he got in the way of a bullet. But it didn't kill him.

When he was twenty-two years old, in 1884, he was working in the cotton fields of Arkansas at fifty cents a day. He didn't see any future in cotton, so he decided to have a go at train robbery—a brash thing for a lad of his age to try. That's what makes him remarkable. He went to Colorado and held up the crack Santa Fe Express and took in $6,480—no tax. Never again would he go back to a mule and a single shovel.

He kept on at it. When he ran out of money, he would hold up a train.

But the pitcher went to the well once too often.

The place was the Blackstone Switch, eight miles north of Muskogee, Oklahoma, on the north side of the Arkansas River and on the south side of the Verdigris River. The date was November 13, 1894. He had three helpers. They worked out their plans to perfection. When the matter was over they would mount their horses and ride away. It would be pie.

They stopped the engine and started to walk to the express car. One of Texas Jack's helpers was Tom Root, an Indian, who could gobble like a wild turkey. This was to be the signal for the men to enter the express car and do their stuff.

Tom Root gobbled.

Bud Ledbetter happened to be on that particular train. He was U. S. Deputy Marshal. When Ledbetter heard the gobble, he cocked his pistol. It was a bright moonlight night. Soon that moonlight was shining through Texas Jack. Bud had shot him through the middle.

Texas Jack, however, was a man of grit. Although badly wounded, he dragged himself to his horse. But he didn't do any fancy riding. It was all he could do to stay in the saddle.

The robbery was a sensation. Oklahoma turned out to hunt for Texas Jack. By this time, it was known who he was. A reward was on his head, dead or alive; shoot first, then ask.

The posse was pressing him close. One night in December, Texas Jack hid half-submerged in the Verdigris River behind a log. His teeth rattled like dice in a leather bottle. But the officers didn't find him.

Jack thought he was going to die and sent for his men, who came secretly. He told them how to divide the money and gave his saddle to his favorite helper. He shook hands with his men and told them good-bye. The men went away sadly. The next day they came back to bury him. There was Jack, still kicking.

"You're too early, boys," he said.

He hid out all winter with Oklahoma hunting high and low. In fact, he hid out four months and five days.

Then he wrote the Hanging Judge—Isaac C. Parker, in Fort Smith, Arkansas—and told him he would "come in." This Texas Jack did—on a home-made crutch. The deputy marshals who had been hunting him for four months shifted their tobacco quids to the other side of their mouths and looked sheepish.

Texas Jack was sentenced and finally, because of good conduct, was pardoned November 19, 1896. Then he began to lecture on Crime Does Not Pay—children half price.

Bud Ledbetter went to hear the lecture. After the lecture was over, the two got to comparing notes and found they were from the same county (Madison) in Arkansas. Bud said if he'd known that he wouldn't have shot him. It shows how Arkansas people stick together.

Jack's next step down was to become a writer. He wrote a book showing that Crime Does Not Pay. He had a covered wagon, slept in it at night, and then sold the book himself—an ideal way to make a living by writing. He completely eliminated the editor—a step up in the publishing business.

He joined a traveling carnival and lectured on his career as a train robber. In the lecture he told how he had known Jesse James. This was where I came in. I was looking up material to write a book on Jesse.

By this time I knew enough about Jesse so that I was certain that Texas Jack had never any more than seen the elusive Jesse. Yet, in his lecture, Texas Jack made it seem that he and Jesse were as necessary to each other as Siamese Twins.

There, in the room, was Texas Jack lying on top of a bed, with a pillow crumpled behind his back. Against one wall was a cabinet with more guns than

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a shooting-gallery. A banner said TEXAS JACK, THE FAMOUS BANDIT FRIEND OF JESSE JAMES.

We talked pleasantly about nothing, then I asked him to tell me about his life as a train robber. He did and with great glee. Then I said, "When and where did you know Jesse James?"

He rattled it off, mentioning a town that I felt pretty sure Jesse had never been in. I made the mistake of telling him so.

He looked at me with the expression of a man cracking hazelnuts with his teeth. "Are you calling me a liar?"

I mumbled I wasn't.

"How long did you know him?" I asked.

"For years."

I told him no one knew Jesse for years, for the simple reason that there was a reward on his head of $10,000 dead or alive, and that Jesse was not going out socially. He said he shore as hops did know him for years and that I was a liar.

"Did you call me a liar?" I demanded.

"I did," said Texas Jack.

I let it go.

I asked him where Jesse had hidden.

"I won't tell you," he said.

"You don't know," I said.

"Then you'll go and publish all kinds of lies about me, when I am a reformed man and my reputation will be ruined."

"I'll publish the truth."

He looked at me with an eye that was cold as a mothball and said, "I don't like you an' I'm goin' to pull down on you."

Reaching under his pillow he brought out a pistol that looked as big as a water plug. "I'm an old man and I ain't got many years to live, so I don't care what happens to me."

I would like to report that I looked him squarely in the eye and told him to throw down the gun and not be a fool—but *alas!* I didn't.

I began to back out and when I got to the door I ran down the hall like an antelope. I say it with shame. But, on the other hand, I am still here.

I didn't report it to the police, for my part was not very heroic.

The old outlaw died January 7, 1950, at the age of 84, and was buried near St. Paul, Arkansas, the last of the old-time horse-and-saddle bandits. As I analyze it now, I don't think he ever knew Jesse James, but, as a youngster, he probably saw Jesse and blew this up into a buddy situation.

I now look back on the experience with a smile, but I didn't smile when I was bounding down that hallway. In fact, I have a kind of sneaking admiration for the old codger.

"So, I'm a dirty, low-down, no-good, sneakin' yellow coyote, huh? Is that a lucky guess or did someone tell yuh?"

MEARS' MARVELOUS RAILROAD

By GENE SPERRY

Photo Courtesy Author

Unusual among railroads was historic Silverton Railroad, built and operated in Colorado by Otto Mears. Long prominent in Ute Indian affairs, Mears began building the railroad in the late 1880's. Located in San Juan County in Southwestern Colorado it was a short line of only seventeen miles. Originally planned to be twenty-six miles in distance, from Silverton to Ouray, the mountains proved to be too great a barrier and Ouray was never reached.

Chartered on July 8, 1887, it was a narrow gauge line with thirty pound rails used in its construction. The Silverton Railroad was completed to the town of Red Mountain in 1889 and later built on to Irontown. Still later it was finally completed at Albany or Joker Tunnel, as it was then called.

It had the reputation of being the steepest (five per cent grades), crookedest (thirty degree curves), and the best paying railroad in Colorado. Old timers claimed that even a jackass had to have hinges on him to get around the curves.

Mears' profit from the line was so great, hauling ores and machinery, that he had two daily passenger trains each way. Strangest of all there was no fare charged. Instead permanent passes were issued.

Each pass was good for the life of the owner and gave an indication of the importance of the man who carried it. Common miners had paste board passes, while gold and silver passes were issued to others. Big mine owners had gold passes, smaller owners had silver passes. A few "buck-skin" (leather) passes were given too.

Most unusual thing about the Silverton Railroad was its turntable built on the main track. After leaving Silverton the railroad climbed to an 11,113 foot mountain pass, then dropped down to the mining communities of Irontown and Albany. In order to reach Red Mountain, the train was run up on a switchback, as there was no available room for a loop. By building a short wye the engine could be turned and the rest of the train was left on the main track. This way the engine was ahead of the train, but the cars were all pulled backwards.

Otto Mears created the shortest but best-paying railroad in the West—freight came high but passengers rode free!

It ran this way until reaching the turntable where the train stopped, the engine was uncoupled, ran onto the turntable, turned, pulled up and stopped. The train was then dropped down-grade across the turntable and stopped. Then the engine backed down and coupled onto the front end of the train.

Another wye was located at Albany and the same procedure was followed as before. Chief Engineer of the Silverton Railroad, C. W. Gibbs, claimed this was the most unique in railroad construction. The turntable was completely covered to protect it from heavy mountain snows. It was used from June 1889 until the road was abandoned in 1911 and no accidents ever occurred.

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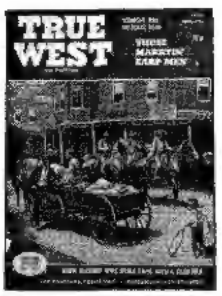

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84—When Ignorance is Bliss, 11x14
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86—Wild Horse Hunters (Indians), 12½x8
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